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WILLIAM LAURIE HILL

BLUEBIRD SONGS OF HOPE AND JOY

BY
WM. LAURIE HILL
POET OF THE PRESS ASSOCIATION OF NORTH CAROLINA
AND
REV. HALBERT G. HILL, D.D.

"Don't ever think the Poetry is dead in an old man because his forehead is wrinkled, or that his manhood has left him when his hand trembles! If they ever were there, they are there still."

O. W. HOLMES.



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PART I

POEMS

By WILLIAM LAURIE HILL



BLUEBIRD SONGS

THE BLUEBIRD

COLD winter with its snowy blasts,
Its icy, chilly, stormy weather,
Is where the midnight sun now casts
Its feeble rays and icebergs gather.

The purling brook, no longer bound
With sparkling links, is gaily singing
A love song to the lilies found
Along its banks like lovers clinging.

The woods are clad from looms of spring,
All nature dyed in hues supernal;
And as we gaze enrapt we sing,
O, Spring! thy reign should be eternal.

And while we sing the feather'd choir,
Their throats athrob with music thrilling,
Ring out glad notes that never tire,
Each leafy bower with bird song trilling.

Ah, Bluebird! with thy glossy coat,
Thou merry, gay and saucy fellow,
The tones from out thy joyous throat
Proclaim a spring-tide soft and mellow.

Thou comest ere the tiny leaves
Dare venture forth in full perfection;
Thou comest ere my spirit breathes,
Free from old winter's chill dejection.

I hail thee, harbinger of spring,
And joy to hear thy merry twitter;
With every spring-tide thou dost bring
Surcease from winter's icy glitter.

Hail, Bluebird, hail! to me thou art
A prince among the tribes of feather;
I give thee welcome from my heart,
A "true-blue" pledge for summer weather.

THE SUNSET SONG

A MEMORY OF OLD ENGLAND

BENEATH her sheeny tent of green,
Close by a blooming hawthorn hedge,
A modest little bird is seen
Crouching in nest of moss and sedge.

She chirps in glee to children three,
So near her tender birdie heart;
Provides their dainty evening tea
Ere twilight bids the day depart.

And as the rosy sunlight fades,
Up, up, the merry skylark soars,
Leaving behind the deep'ning shades,
While from her mouth sweet music pours.

A bright cascade of crystal notes
Descend from far celestial blue,

On evening air the songbird floats,
Entrancing me with music true.

That sunset song I'll ne'er forget,
That skylark singing in the blue,
Those notes, I hear their echoes yet,
The sweetest song I ever knew.

DO BIRDS FORGET?

Do birds forget? Ah, no!
The robin hies away
To fields where many dainty morsels grow.
Though tempted oft to stay,
Though friends beguile each day,
Homeward he flies, the way he well doth know.

The swallow soars away,
Floating in ether rare—
Greeting the early dawn, the sun's first ray,
Nor fears the summer glare;
And yet the mating pair,
At evening homeward quickly find their way.

Beneath our eaves the wren
Buildeth her tidy nest,
And as the seasons go and come again,
However far her quest,
She ne'er forgets her nest,
But homeward flies through pelting snow or rain.

'Tis human folk forget
How oft they wander far;
And when with cares and many ills beset,
When things seem all ajar,
When heart wounds leave a scar,
Then do some men their dear old homes forget.

When ends life's pilgrim way,
And we review the past,
Then we shall treasure each bright, happy day
Before we felt the blast;
And skies were overcast:
Before from childhood's nest we went astray.

NOT EVEN A SPARROW

THE autumn tints were glowing in the western sky,
The russet leaves were dancing in the breeze,
The summer birds to summer homes had sung
good-by;
Had flown where gentle zephyrs ever sigh,
Leaving behind gray twigs and leafless trees.

All nature seem'd a-chill with autumn's blighting
breath,
The evening shadows crept along the wall
As day departed and the dark'ning night, like death,
Spread forth its pall and to the soul it saith,
"I give thee rest, sweet rest, await day's call."

Beside my window as I sat and watch'd the gloom
Without, while bright my firelight blazed within,

A cheerful twitter from the eaves quite near my
room,

Bade me look up and I should see a home,
Without the warmth of fire, or blight of sin.

Two saucy sparrows in their warm brown feather'd
coats,

Were talking love and chirping of their day;
So busy they had found no time "to look for moths
In other sparrows' eyes or e'en to sow wild oats";
Their day had sped in a more genial way.

And now at home in deep'ning shades at evening's
close,

They whisper evening pray'r and vespers sing,
"Not ev'n a sparrow falleth but the Father knows."
In faith they seek from Him protection and repose,
And cunningly each tucks a head beneath a wing.

Ah, simple faith; not ev'n a sparrow falleth dead,
Leaving bereft its plaintive feather'd mate;
Nor child of his unfed and lacking daily bread,
But feels the Father's hand, by Him is gently led,
Like sparrows trust, and on His footsteps wait.

ROBIN REDBREAST

Out through the fields I walk'd e'er bud and bloom
Had dared to venture forth from winter's tomb,
And as I sought to find some sign of spring
A robin redbreast came on joyous wing.

With merry notes he flits from bush to spray,
Or peeping forth from bracken by the way,

Tells of the summer days he left behind,
Where shaded swamps were wonderfully kind.

Where everything is green the winter through,
Where orange blooms are sweet and skies are blue,
And all is summertime from day to day,
While all the birds are happy, blythe and gay.

"Glad robin, warble of thy happy hours.
Shall summer come to this chill land of ours?"
From sedge and boll he doth a nest prepare;
He answers thus without one thought of care.

"Although the mornings may be crisp and cool,
When robin comes he is no 'April fool.'
Soon shall we see the bud, the bloom, the flow'r,
And leaves will make bare twigs a silvan bow'r."

Come with thy notes of joy, we welcome thee,
Our orchards bid thee nest in every tree;
Our home is brighter and more full of cheer,
For robin redbreast tells that spring is here.

DESOLATE

THE eagle mates but once, no after love
Doth claim devotion from this kingly bird,
When some fell shaft, deadly and yet unheard,
Smites one who shared his eyrie up above.

Long years they nested on yon lonely rock,
Above the mists beshrouding valleys low,

Together breasted many a tempest shock,
Fearless of thunder and the lightning's glow.

Forth from their eyrie launched each year their
brood;

Taught them their unskill'd pinions first to try,
Ere they should seek amid the wilds their food
And build themselves a home toward the sky.

Alone he sits on highest mountain peak,
Calls her who ne'er shall answer him again;
Sends challenge to the winds with many a shriek,
His talons stain'd with blood of victims slain.

Grim monarch of a realm toward the sun,
How desolate thou art in thy lone home!
Soon thy last weary waiting shall be done,
Thy strength and beauty mingle with earth's loam.

Though desolate thou art, thy love is true;
Though strong and cruel thou must meet thy fate.
We know no realm beyond the distant blue,
Where the lone eagle meets again his mate.

THE EAGLE

No master have I among men,
No bird dares to meet me in fight;
Away from the marsh and the fen
I soar toward infinite light.

My home is the cleft of the rock
Far up where the chamois ne'er goes;

I fear not the lightning's rude shock,
I gaze on the eternal snows.

I watch for the coming of dawn,
My eye from afar sees my prey;
I swoop upon pasture or lawn,
Bear swiftly my quarry away.

Up, up, where my eaglets await—
The banquet they eagerly share,
And gladly I welcome my mate,
Our talons each morsel shall tear.

Together we've breasted the gale,
Have flown through the far-reaching blue;
And oft through the snow and the hail
Our pinions have carried us true.

The deep solitudes are our own,
Away from dominion of man;
Far up on our aery of stone
The lowlands to us seem a span.

An emblem of liberty—we
Are found on the banners of men;
The eagle must ever be free
On mountain-top—not in the glen.

We soar where the air is so rare,
And clouds are ofttimes at our feet;
No bird dares our kingdom to share,
For battle to them means defeat.

Unblenching our eyes greet the sun,
Unquailing we meet every foe;
Exult o'er each victory won,
With "a call of the wild" all may know.

'Tis sweet so unfettered to be,
The eagle is freer than man;
An emblem to us of the free,
Like him be as free as you can.

BOB WHITE

THE reapers have come, Bob White,
To gather the golden grain;
The scythes flash in the morning light,
The harvest song is cheery and bright,
For it bringeth golden gain.

As with sturdy stroke they go,
A rich swath is left behind;
Each binder stands his stooks in row.
What of thy nest in the grass below?
Poor Bob White no nest may find.

With trembling and plaintive call,
Thy timorous children flee.
Beneath the leaves and the weeds that fall
In hope and fear dost thou hide them all.
Poor Bob White, we pity thee.

* * * * *

The huntsmen have come, Bob White,

The men with the dogs and gun;
They know thy haunts in meadow and field,
The scent of the dogs hath thee reveal'd—
Their gruesome work hath begun.

The coveys are thin, Bob White,
For the game-bag hath rich store;
Thy plaintive call in the soft twilight
Is heard by few in the dark'ning night—
They shall hear that call no more.

Sport of the hunter, Bob White,
Thou hast on our sod no home;
Thou lovest the summer mornings bright,
The cool green copse with its shaded light,
A bath in the sandy loam.

Poor birds of the weary wing,
What dangers beset your way!
Your plaintive call over field and ling
Is ever heard in the early spring
As you roam from day to day.

A homeless and hunted bird,
In briar and weeds out of sight;
Your cry hath my deepest pity stirr'd,
Poor wandering, trembling, hunted bird—
To huntsmen "just game"—Bob White.

A BARNYARD DISPUTATION

"'TIS cold! old Jack Frost bites my toes,
And had I not my winter clothes
I'd be in sorry plight.
Give me the summertime, I say,
When everything is bright and gay.
Old winter take thy flight."

'Twas thus cried Chanticleer while he
In plumage gay sat in a tree.
Beneath him near a pond,
A flock of ducks were well content;
On cold, bleak days long hours there spent,
Of water they were fond.

"Oh, cease your claver, Chanticleer!
So happy we why should we hear
Your 'little tale of woe'?
The weather's fine this autumn day—
Just take one minute now and say
In few words all you know.

"Then just be still or take a swim,
And quaff enjoyment to the brim;
Ah, then you'll gladly say,
I wish I were a duck for then,
I'd splash and wade in pond or fen,
Nor fear the coldest day."

Now Chanticleer was very proud.
While all the ducks were quacking loud
 He gave a mighty crow.
Arching his neck he then did say—
"Keep your advice, 'tis thrown away,
 For you are quacks, you know."

A flock of geese were standing by,
With honk and flutter "Hush!" they cry—
 "Nor break our peace to-day.
Let Chanticleer think as he will,
If we can only get our fill
 Of water here we stay."

"Quack! quack! honk! honk!" both ducks and geese
Laugh at the thought of breaking peace,
 When they were all so gay.
"Now Mister Chanticleer, just go
And hide from coming frost and snow,
 'Tis just a chicken's way.

"We hail the fleecy down that falls,
And seek no shelter in the stalls
 When keen cold breezes blow.
Go, Chanticleer! we laugh at thee,
Thy crow is only bluff, you see,
 For all thy plumes and show."

THE BLUE JAY

AN old Blue Jay sat on a dead limb one day,
With a toss of his head in masterful way,
Kept crying aloud to all comers, "Chay! chay!
Oh, beware how you meddle with this Blue Jay!"

He calls on a neighbor who has a good nest,
With soft fleecy lining and skill of the best;
So he takes possession without more ado,
Only saying, "I like it! Don't you? Don't you?"

He finds a good orchard with plenty of fruit,
And other birds find it a good place to loot;
Joint ownership does not please Mister Blue Jay,
So he marshals his forces and drives them away.

Some Jays without feathers take all they can get,
And when they have all they are wanting more yet;
The cry of the horseleech is theirs ev'ry day,
They only lack feathers to be a Blue Jay.

I HEAR DAT TURKEY GOBBLE

YAS, I hear dat turkey gobble,
Dey's got him in de pen;
Oh, how he strut and gobble!
He do jus' lak some men.

And de way dat he be doin'
You'd think he own'd de yeath,

But de way dat he's pursuin'
Will sholy mean his death.

My ole rooster he been crowin'
For days 'fore ten o'clock;
De ole year hit's a-goin'
Not many days in stock.

An' Chris'mus hit's right at us,
De turkey gobbles corn;
He don't know whar he will be
Afore de Chris'mus dawn.

Dere's somethin' tasty cookin',
A scrumshous smell is 'round;
Ah, I don't need no lookin'
To tell me what I'se found.

Dat gobbler done stop gobblin',
He's brownin' on de spit;
Aunt Tilsy she stop hobblin',
Forgits she's lame a bit.

She watch dat lordly turkey,
An' baste hit wid de juice.
"Say, nigger, ain't we lucky
When white folks turns hit loose?"

'POSSUM TIME

KING COTTON he done shed his jacket,
An' de fiel's looks white as snow;
De pickers dey is at dere racket,
An' a-singin' as dey go.

"Here's my ole Bowser, he done foller,
As I picks along de row;
He smell a 'possum track den holler,
'Oof! oof!' an' away he go.

"He gwyn track dat 'possum to his log,
Den he wait untwell I come;
Fer tra'kin' he's de beatenist dog,
Den fer fightin' he is some.

"Ole Bowser he beat any shotgun,
He don' mind de frosty a'r;
I tell you, boss, hit takes a smart un
For to ketch a 'possum far.

"I loves to see him grinnin' at me,
An' Bowser he jus' grinnin' back;
If I don' cut dat tree den, drat me,
Tote dat 'possum to my shack.

"Mars' 'Possum stan' no show whatever,
Loses out twix Bowser'n me;
I spec he wishes now he never
Had a-clomb dat 'simmon tree.

"He knows how sweet dem yams is gittin',
An' *I* knows *he's* sleek an' fat;
Dat gravy brown keeps me a-settin',
An' hain't got no time ter chat.

"I holds my hand when Gawd am givin',
Don' wait fer annoder day;
I sho am glad dat I am livin'
When a 'possum come my way."

DAT COON DOG

"WHAT kind of dog is that, old man?"
I ask'd a white wool'd African
As black as any moonless night.
"Dat dorg's a coon dorg frum 'way back,
An' he kin smell de 'possum track,
An' run de rabbit outen sight."

"Don't he like sheep meat rather well?
It seems to me I have heard tell
That he loves eggs and eats them raw."
"Now, boss, don't scan'alize me so,
Bosen of sheep is skeer'd, you know,
An' aigs don' satisfy his maw.

"He's de bes' coon dorg in de land,
He's got de grit dat always stand;
Dere ain't nar coon has whipp'd him yit."
"And still he runs from sheep, you say?
A plucky dog to run that way,
And only sheep can make him git?"

"You keep me 'splainin' fer dat dorg,
Sure as de coon can walk de log,
Dere ain't no harum in Bosen, sur;
I 'low he eat mos' kinds er meat,
To hen-roosts I'se not track'd his feet;
He's jes' er cross twix hound an' cur."

NEBUCHADNEZZAR AND JIM

A MONOLOGUE

"DAT's what I said, sar,
Nebuchadnezzar;
Jes' de 'titlements
Uv dat 'ar mule dar.
Knows when I calls him,
'Feard not to mind Jim,
'Caze he done larn sense.
Whoa, dar, mule!

"Whar git dat name frum?
Sho I mus' larf some
When you ax me dat.
Named fur a king, sar,
Nebuchadnezzar,
Is dat ole mule dar?
He poor as er rat.
Gee, dar, mule!

"De Good Book tell how
Dar once was a row
Twixt de good Lawd an'
Nebuchadnezzar.

King he had no show,
Had ter git an' go
Out whar de grass grow.
Haw, dar, mule!

"Lef' his yaller gold,
Cone pone an' horg jowl,
Rich crown an' slippers.
Went out ter crop grass,
Jes' lak a jackass;
Come to a sad pass,
Tuck other folks' sass.
Back, dar, mule!

"An' dis here mule, sar,
Nebuchadnezzar,
Nuver gits grass 'nough.
A whole fodder stack
Carn't set his maw back;
Don't take no back track,
'Way frum de straw rack.
Git, dar, mule!

"Is he a good mule?
Dat 'pends on what rule
You jedge critturs by.
Ain't nar fence too high
But he's sho to try,
Skin shins er git by,
Ter retch grass inch high.
Haw, dar, mule!

“But when he’s at biz,
Watch him plow, gee whiz!
Nebuchadnezzar.
Meck dat old plow sizz,
See dat sod done riz,
Wuck lak er gin-fizz.
Dat’s what I call biz.
Whoa, dar, mule!

“Ain’t no pious mule,
B’en ter no trick schule,
But he can git dar.
’Ceptin’ he knows you,
Bes’ thing you kin do,
Keep frum dat hine shoe.
Nebuchadnezzar
Kin kick, sar!”

WHEN DE GHOSTIES WALK

'Tis sleepy time, 'tis creepy time,
And mammy sits and sings;
She grumbles out some funny rhyme,
'Tis drowsy-like and all its chime
"About de angels' wings."

And baby blinks and baby winks,
But she is wide awake;
She looks as knowing as the sphinx,
But does not tell you what she thinks,
The cunning little fake.

"Sleep, baby, sleep; de shadders creep;
Sleep 'fore de ghosties walk.
Yo' mammy keeps you while you sleep,
De angels, too, dere watch will keep;
Don't mind de ghostie talk.

"Jus' shut dem peeps an' sleep fer keeps,
Untwell de mawnin' light;
Dis lamb is sweeter'n all de sheeps.
Sleep, baby, sleep; de shadder creeps
Toward de mawnin' bright."

Old mammy sings while snowy wings
Of sleep come gently down;
The ghosties' zephyr whisperings,
The angel smile to baby brings,
Without a tear or frown.

SONGS OF THE SEASON

SPRINGTIDE

BRIDE of the year, thou bringest naught but cheer
To our glad hearts;
In bright and winsome spring all voices sing
And gloom departs.

The happy birds speak forth their trilling words
In gladsome song;
Old Mother Earth now laughs in vernal mirth
In echoes long.

Bright springtide, thou art blooming even now
With blossoms gay;
The apple, peach and pear, the dogwood fair,
Bedeck thy way.

Yet this sweet bride must meet the coming tide
Of summer days;
This fair young bride assume the matron's bow
And winsome ways.

I love thee yet as bride whate'er betide
The coming days;
No summer day shall ever steal away
My love and praise.

THE OLD APPLE TREE

IN childhood's early days beneath thy shade,
On soft green sod I found a resting place;
Here with companions many hours have play'd,
While joyous moments o'er us sped apace.

In springtide beauty when each twig's aglow
With bloom as rich as any garden queen,
We gather'd nosegays that sweetheart might know
Naught now could ever come our hearts between.

We watch'd the growing, turning, blushing fruit,
And oft would slyly nip with a grimace,
The tempting embryo with taste acute,
That leaves behind a pucker'd, rueful face.

In summer when from out thy sheeny leaves
Shines forth in red and gold the fruit we love,
When near the trunk is shock'd the russet sheaves,
'Tis harvest apples we would then approve.

When autumn comes with cutting wind and frost,
Thy juicy fruit, old apple tree, is fine;
No treasure from thy boughs should e'er be lost,
The flavor thou dost give is like rare wine.

And when beside the ingle bright we meet,
And pass the nuts from our old walnut tree
To friend and neighbor we will add a treat,
A rich and spicy apple cull'd from thee.

APRIL'S WOOING

THE early April days are crisp and cool,
The early mornings bring a frosty air;
Many a promise and an April fool
For those who would soft springtide glories share.

For April is a coy and changeful maid,
Her early beauty like a statue cold;
Old graybeard winter makes her half afraid
While wooing her with love that's chill and old.

See, see young Sol, a rival in the field,
Is melting in his mood of tenderness,
And April softens and at last doth yield
Both tears and kisses to his fond caress.

Now as these April days go softly by
The love of Sol and April blooms and flow'rs;
Sweet April days (their children) smile or sigh,
Joy in the light or welcome April show'rs.

DAYBREAK

THE daylight is dawning,
The tints of the morning
Are gilding the crests of the mountains in view;
The song birds are singing,
Their gladsome notes ringing,
As preening their plumage they scatter the dew.

The daylight is dawning,
On ocean the morning
Grows rosy, the billows—a-blush with delight—
Are gracefully dancing,
To greet the advancing
Of light king and lover so warm and so bright.

Oh, beautiful daylight,
The fast-fading starlight
Grows pale as the light king ascends on his way.
His coming as light king
Doth follow the day spring,
All nature must yield to his genial sway.

The daylight is dawning,
We welcome the morning,
A prophet, it tells of eternity's dawn,
When shadow and sorrow
Shall have no to-morrow,
From earth, crime and sin blight shall ever be gone.

APRIL DAYS

SWEET April days are here,
Borne on the breath of spring;
Soft days with shine and tear,
With bloom and smile and cheer,
Good tidings bring,
Sweet April days.

Life's tide is at the flood,
And ev'ry living thing
Is pulsing with the blood
From Nature's heart: each bud
Is echoing—
Sweet April days.

The sycamore, its crest
Now touch'd with living green,
Will soon give shelter'd rest,
And happy birds will nest
Safe and serene,
 These April days.

The farmer turns the sod
And sings a song of joy,
Casts seed with weary plod,
Then upward looks to God.
Safe his employ,
 In April days.

How bright the promise now,
In this the seeding time;
What though the toiler's brow
Be furrowed by the plow,
His hope sublime
 Waits autumn days.

EASTER DAWN

HAIL, Easter dawn! how bright thy old, old story!
To pilgrim hearts 'tis ever, ever new;
Thou dost foretell the swiftly coming glory
That in eternity our eyes shall view.

The world is growing old and time is weary,
And yet the seasons haste not as they fly;
One swift, short step from spring to winter dreary,
And earth her garniture of green lays by.

An old year sleeps the sleep that knows no waking,
The new, comes bounding with a song of joy,
For soon another Easter dawn is breaking,
And Nature's chorus joins the glad employ.

Each Easter dawn repeats redemption's story,
Our ear of faith can catch heav'n's glad refrain,
As shining ranks upon the hills of glory
Join in a song to Him who lives again.

Ah! we shall Jesus see in all His beauty,
And cast our earth-worn chaplets at His feet;
Anew shall pledge a never-failing duty,
Some Easter dawn we shall our Master greet.

ACROSS THE FURROWS

THE day is waning, slowly sinks the sun
Toward his setting past yon western hills;
My day of toil with many furrows won
Soon ends, and I shall rest by yonder rill.

My day of toil made bright by tender thought,
Of those beneath the old farm roof—our home—
Inspir'd by love another day hath wrought,
That harvest days may to my loved ones come.

And as I turn the sod I fondly dream,
Of coming days rich with the golden grain,
And hear the mill-wheel down by yonder stream,
Humming most merrily a glad refrain.

"Hark!" there's a call, a dear, sweet baby voice,
Across the furrows greets my list'ning ear,
"Daddy, I come!"—it makes my heart rejoice
To see my darling lassie drawing near.

"Come, darling, come; thy daddy waits for thee;
Come, mount the plow, along the furrows ride.
How bright and gladsome would each work-day be
Could daddy only have thee by his side."

The day is done, homeward our way we take;
The toil forgotten, she beguiles the way;
Her merry voice the gloaming doth awake
With sweetest vespers heard at close of day.

Years now have pass'd and I shall hear no more
Across the furrows, "Daddy, here I come."
Her little journey through life's fields now o'er,
I soon shall meet her in our heav'nly home.

THE RAIN SONG

It comes with a patter, the rain, the rain,
With a dash and a splash on my window-pane;
How sweet is the odor from upturned sod,
How cooling these glorious showers of God.

The earth long athirst now drinketh her fill,
Merrily singeth each brooklet and rill;
The clouds of the Master obey His hand,
And blessings distill on the thirsty land.

Oh, rain of the springtide, gentle and sweet,
Thy soft tear-like weeping we gladly greet;
For thee shrub and flower open the heart,
Exhaling odors defying all art.

Rain of the summer, thou comest with pow'r,
With the lightning's flash and the storm clouds
 glow'r;
And yet when thy thunders have roll'd away,
Thou hast brighten'd and blest our summer day.

Oh, rain of the autumn, thy chilling breath,
With fading bloom and a harvest of death,
E'en thou art a blessing for harvest days,
Come after thy rain clouds have gone their ways.

Oh, rain of the winter, though cold and chill,
Thou art only obeying thy Master's will;
Old earth bares her breast to thy stormy fall,
And Nature is shrouded in icy pall.

So greet we the raindrops, messengers all,
They come and they go at our Master's call;
Our earth has no blessing so rich in dow'r,
As the springtide rain or the summer show'r.

SUMMER

IN SUMMERTIME

'Tis summertime, the long and lazy hours
Are slow of wing;
We watch their flight while all our drowsy pow'rs
Are echoing,
 'Tis summertime.

And I would seek some cool, sequester'd glade
By mountain stream,
And there beneath the beechwood's shelt'ring shade
Would lie and dream,
 In summertime.

I hear the tinkling sheep-bells far away,
The hum of bees,
As on swift wing they toil from day to day
(For winter's ease),
 In summertime.

The cattle seek the woodland's grateful shade
And sweet content
Rests like a benediction on this glade,
And hours there spent,
 In summertime.

Soft breezes play around the fever'd brow,
Wooing to rest;
And here in wakeful, happy slumber now
May I with zest
 Greet summertime.

The sparkling brook joins in bright Nature's song,
Pure notes and true;
While woodland harmonies their strains prolong,
Strains ever new,
In summertime.

Or should my fancy seek old ocean's shore,
Glad would I be
To watch thy crested waves and hear thy roar,
Oh, restless sea!
In summertime.

To count the swan-like sails in distant view,
As bound afar
They plow the waves and answer quick and true
The jolly tar,
In summertime.

To watch the seagulls fighting with the gale,
In daring flight,
As out to sea they follow some swift sail,
Nor heed the night,
In summertime.

The heart at ease can ever find some spot
In every clime,
Where earthly sorrows for the time forgot,
Earth seems sublime,
Blest summertime!

To weary hearts pent up in cities' heat,
Panting for life;

To tired limbs and aching, lagging feet,
Worn down with strife,
In summertime.

To these may come few days of peaceful rest
Along life's way,
But they shall find beyond the distant west,
Eternal day,
Glad summertime.

IN FODDER-PULLIN' TIME

A HOMELY SOUTHERN MEMORY

I'M not a hand fer tellin'
Of stories with a rhyme,
Nor be I good at spellin',
Or writin' any time;
But if you come to workin'
In July's blazin' sun,
Huntin' fer a harvest han',
Why, I'm the very one.

Now if you want to settle
The merits of a man,
When hotter 'en a kettle,
You crave 'er 'lectric fan,
Jes' take him to er cornfield,
In fodder-pullin' time;
At that work if he don't shirk,
His merits is sublime.

To have the sun a-shinin'
Right through yer ole straw hat,
The very ground a-burnin',
Yer body fryin' fat,
And you right down to b'siness,
In the middle of the row,
Strippin' stalks, now I call that,
"A fodder-pullin' go."

'Long to'rds noon I see a chap
A-totin' of a pail.
Down the lane and thru the gap
(He jumped the lo'most rail)
The chipper little rascal
Was whistlin' some ole rhyme,
An' didn't keer how dry we were,
In fodder-pullin' time.

Here, you scamp, give us a drink
From out that gourd of your'n.
Shoshin o'er its tempting brink
Is drink that mought be our'n.
No drink I've tasted like it,
Its flavor was just prime,
The cider drunk from that old gourd,
In fodder-pullin' time.

Them times gone won't come again,
Fer folks has larn'ed new ways
Of cuttin' corn. 'Tis a sin
Ter change them good ole days.

Fodder-pullin' was the fad
When you an' I was boys,
Sho it makes me downright mad
Ter think of all them joys.

Gone glimmerin', no more to come,
An' new things all the go,
We's back-numbers in the sum,
Leastwise some folks think so;
No more we'll drink the cider,
Keep step to song and rhyme,
Strippin' blades from off the corn,
"In fodder-pullin' time."

SUMMER DAWN

SLEEP, sluggard, sleep; nor greet the summer dawn;
In languid ease pass golden hours in sleep,
Until the glorious summer dawn hath gone,
In Letheland thy drowsy vigils keep.

Sleep, laggard, sleep; heed not bright Nature's call;
The dew hath ris'n and sprinkl'd ev'ry flow'r,
The birds in song are blending voices all,
Hast thou no welcome now for this glad hour?

Soft is the breeze that sings o'er bloom and tree,
Bright the first gleam that tells of coming day;
Soon shall the king of dawn bid darkness flee,
And yet yon sleeper drowzes life away.

How like ye to the Russian monks at Kiev,
Dwelling in catacombs among the dead,
When they might those dank chambers quickly leave
And share the royal splendors overhead.

Resplendent summer dawn, I welcome thee;
Let others drowse away so rare a sight.
Come, fill my longing soul with ecstasy,
Thrill me again with ever new delight.

THE SHEARING

How trustfully the sheep their shepherd follow,
And, nothing fearing,
Silently, patiently, accept their shearing;
When shear'd they still the shepherd's leading follow.

A message now to man, these sheep are speaking,
They dread the shearing.
Yet trust the shepherd still, and nothing fearing,
His voice and loving care, are gladly seeking.

Our shepherd shears his sheep, removes their fleeces,
We dread the chilling.
And bleating, blame the shepherd; never willing
To give, and give, until the shearer ceases.

There comes no clip that shears us of a blessing
By Heav'n given.
There comes no need, however soul distressing,
That is not sent to draw us nearer Heav'n.

THE FROST AND THE ROSEBUSH

I AM king of old winter, its ice and snow
Do I weave in my looms, where the north winds
 blow,
And cast them at will over mountain and rill,
Bind old ocean in chains, bid the lake be still.

With fairy-like fingers I paint flow'r and fern
On thy window, drape tree and bush, by the burn.
All nature is mine, until the sun doth shine,
Then, my scepter must yield, to a pow'r divine.

I'm queen of the summer, and fear not king frost,
Although in December my buds were all lost,
For old frost king shall go, with his ice and snow
And my blossoms shall gladden the summer glow.

The queen of summer is sweetly sleeping now,
While frost king is quietly kissing her brow.
She awakes, for 'tis spring, while her greybeard
 king
Gently melting in dew, to her rosebuds cling.

EBB AND FLOW

IN the sunset glow, on a summer day,
I have wander'd beside the sea,
And gazed on the billowy waves at play,
In graceful swirl, and sportive way,
 As a child in its gladsome glee.

The pulse of the tide was so strong that day,
'Twas the throbbing heart of the sea,
Ebbing and flowing in masterful way,
While unto my heart did it seem to say,
 "O! I sing of eternity."

This life is an ocean, and on its tides,
Are the hopes and sorrows of men.
Our joys are fleeting, no pleasure abides,
With flow and ebb like the ocean tides,
 Do our blessings fade from our ken.

'Tis ebb and flow, with our lives each hour,
Our moments, like waves of the sea.
They bear us in safety, though storm clouds low'r,
 If at helm, our pilot shall be.

GOOD MORNING

WHEN morning breaks upon a busy world,
And sunlight gilds the misty mountain top,
We watch with joy day's banner now unfurl'd,
List to the hum, from labor's mart and shop;
 And, bid the world good morning.

A cheery word to toilers by the way,
Is like rare wine, unto the weary soul.
It maketh bright an erstwhile gloomy day,
It heartens weary seekers, for the goal;
 To hear thee say—"good morning!"

The silent churl, who lives for self alone,
Seeks but to gain more wealth, and greater pow'r.
His heart each year is hard'ning more like stone,

While he apart from man hath grown each hour.
How can he say, good morning?

The world is bright, to him who looks for light;
The cheery heart reaps sunshine ev'ry day.
Reflected sunshine scatters gloomy night,
And all is bright; the shadows flee away,
As he doth say, good morning!

FROM MOUNTAIN HEIGHTS

THE lowlands sleep in languid beauty
In summer days.
Their deep cool shades
And mossy glades
Echo the merry song-birds' duty,
In tuneful lays.

Bright gleams the cotton, blooming, fruiting,
These summer days.
The rustling corn
Waves each bright morn,
Pure nature scorns all that's polluting
In man's dark ways.

The juniper, the bay, the myrtle,
Find here rich loam.
The lordly pine,
Bamboo and vine,
In swamp and low ground rich and fertile,
Enjoy their home.

While lowland homes have much of beauty
And nature here
Abounds in cheer,
While far and near,
Orchards yield harvests, rich and fruity,
To homes most dear.

The mountains to the deep blue climbing
Each lofty peak,
Where eagles shriek:
Their aeries seek:
And notes, from nature's heart, are chiming:
I fane would seek.

Dwellers in the lowlands, look aloft:
Seek ye to go
Where summer snow
Reflects the glow
Of sunlight rare; and the crisp winds oft
In summer blow.

On the mountain's cool and breezy crest
'Tis well to be,
And as we see,
Meadow and lea,
Valley and stream, eastward, and to the west,
Upborne are we.

On mountain heights, landscapes greet the eye,
Ne'er seen below.
We see and know,
That promis'd bow,

That takes new radiance bye and bye;
Heav'ns prism-like glow.

From mountain heights our old eyes shall see,
The promis'd land.
Firm may we stand,
Heed His command.
Gloaming time shall bring eternity:
In Beulah-land.

SUNSET

EACH day, however bright and gay,
However dark with sorrow,
Must in its evening pass away,
Make room for a to-morrow.

Each life, however glad it be,
Must meet some days of sadness,
For man can ne'er expect to see,
This life all joy and gladness.

Life's sunset comes to each and all,
Oh! may its rays supernal,
Shine brightly on thy funeral pall,
With beams that are eternal.

THE PASSION FLOWER

ALONG the dusty way, where weary feet
Are throbbing with the strain of busy life,
And men are toiling, hoping they may meet
Some guerdon worthy of so ardent strife:

Where rustles in the summer breeze, the corn,
Its silken tassels, sheeny in the sun,
And morning glories, climbing, do adorn
With royal purple harvests well begun:

'Tis here you find me, just a passion flow'r,
No florist seeks my bloom to cultivate,
In field and by-way, taking sun and show'r,
And I companion not with blooms of state.

And yet, my blooms, kind friends, do not disdain,
For he who paints the lily and the rose
With light and sunshine, and sweet show'rs of rain,
To me gives restful tints; not sunset glows.

Man's fancy doth within my very heart,
A cross descry, which tells of Calvary.
They find the nails, the wounds, and nature's art,
Doth a corona paint, that all may see.

Thus while I bloom, in fields and dusty ways,
And do not rival any garden queen,
My name is ever link'd with Easter days,
The brightest days our earth hath ever seen.

ONE SUMMER NIGHT

BENEATH the twinkling stars,
One summer night,
I sat and gazed, awed and amazed,
For 'neath those twinkling stars,
Were eyes more bright than glowing Mars.

Beneath the soft sweet light,
That summer night,
I sought to find, if love were blind,
So blind, the lassie might,
A lover find, and bless the sight.

And, while I gazed, those eyes,
Those soft sweet eyes,
Seem'd far away, nor would they stay,
But sought in any wise,
To "say me nay," in silent guise.

I found a little hand,
All soft and pink,
Toying with curls, "as other girls,"
And I did gently link
Those pearl and pink fingers to mine.

Through me there came a thrill
Of hope and joy.
Her gentle eyes shone with surprise,
But, there was change of will;
And no disguise, my hope could chill.

Beneath the twinkling stars
That summer night
Begun my day, and life's new way,
Had then no ugly jars.
How bright each ray, lit 'neath the stars.

MOONLIGHT

A HALLOWED MEMORY

It was a moonlight night in leafy June,
Ah, how can I forget?
All earth seem'd bathed in light from that fair moon,
All nature's notes in sweet and mellow tune,
Its music lingers yet.

A royal queen, with most transcendent grace,
She threads the milky way.
Her silver beams illumine depths of space,
I would not, if I could, that light efface,
Nor dim one single ray.

That night, with all its glory, brought a joy
That cheers the lonely heart.
A joy that should bring blended lives no cloy.
A joy delightsome, heartsome, tender, coy,
And it should ne'er depart.

And now, when o'er the landscape moonbeams play,
With bright shadowy grace,
Lighting some home, as in the far away,
With wedding beams, oh, then, my heart doth say,
"I would go back a pace."

Back to the happy days that are no more,
Days full of joy and love,
Back to the ingle, through the old home door,
Where all was peace, when daily toil was o'er,
A peace like that above.

OLD SILAS THE FISHERMAN

BESIDE the creek bank, in a cool shady spot,
Sat old Silas Maccubbin,
With "none of yer fixin's, and that kinder rot,
Yer flies and yer fishin' reels:" none had he got,
But, he caught fish when a fishin'.

A rummy old chap, with sharp eyes like a hawk,
Was old Silas Maccubbin.
And he had a rickety-rockety walk,
And a voice as rough as a Guineahen's squawk.
But, he caught fish when a fishin'.

Oh! it made him so mad! for an eel to bite,
Then, swore Silas Maccubbin.
"I know," he would say, "swarin's not at all right,
But them pesky eels makes me cuss out'en sight,
Don't cuss, 'cept eels spiles my fishin'."

If our boys and girls, on a fish fry would go,
They found Silas Maccubbin.
He got them a boat, and a dug-out or so,
And down the cool stream, floats each girl and her
beau,
Very sure they, of the fishin'.

They tie to the bank and in couples they pair,
Some watch Silas Maccubbin.
But, the old man's sharp eyes rove not here nor
there,
He said, "I'm as fear'd of the gals as a bear,
So I'll just 'tend to my fishin'."

How jolly the days, in that cool shady spot,
Spent with Silas Maccubbin.
Only dug-out and paddle, no fancy yacht,
Taking fisherman's luck, and fisherman's lot,
But we caught fish when a fishin'.

Only a fisherman, both jolly and rough,
Was old Silas Maccubbin.
Only a waterman, both gnarly and tough,
Not much for talkin' he was sometimes quite gruff,
But he caught fish when a fishin'.

BAIT MY HOOK

UPON a log, beside the river bank,
Beneath the willow's shade,
A coy maiden sat, just ready for some prank.
Toward a lad, she gave a cunning look,
And smiling, said, "Now, Frank, just bait my
hook?"

For one such look, from those sweet dreamy eyes,
What would not Frank have done?
He takes the wiggling worm, "seems very wise,"
With fingers deft, and tender bashful look
At smiling Joan; he quickly baits her hook.

Now Joan is just a fisherwoman right,
How many lads doth she,
Deftly entangle, with those eyes so bright.
Not one but she can swiftly "bring to book,"
Quoth she, "they only serve to bait my hook."

The larger fish are those that Joan would land.
Frank only serves for bait.
He does not seem the game to understand.
Is dazzled by the glamour in her look.
Nor yet doth feel the piercing of her hook.

Oh! lads beware! the Joan's are very sly.
How well they know their bait.
And as you watch some all beguiling eye
Surrender not to her bewitching look,
Nor be a gudgeon, just to bait her hook.

AUTUMN

AUTUMN SHADOWS

THE year is growing old, the moments flying
 Swift as the light,
And autumn winds are sadly sobbing, sighing,
As sweet bright summer lies a dying, dying,
 This autumn night.

Her sunny smile is now fast fading, fading,
 And soon 'twill cease
To light our earth with its supernal shading;
No odors sweet the balmy breezes lading,
 She claims release:

And sleeps amid the ruins of the ages,
 Nor wakes again.
And naught is left to tell in future pages,
That might be read, by coming sires and sages,
 Of her bright reign.

The autumn woods, to-day in dyes of glory,
 From woodland heart,
In blood red tints, emblazon the sad story.
In russet tones, they say, "the year grows hoary:
 Must soon depart."

Where shall we look for lovely buds and flowers,
 When north winds blow?
Where shall we seek the bright, warm, sunny hours,
When autumn clouds weep dreary, stormy showers,
 Where shall we go?

Autumn, with all thy glory glinting beauty,
Thou art still sad
To me: e'en though, as a reward for duty,
Thou bringest in thy harvest, a rich booty,
And earth grows glad.

Thou art a picture of life's joy and sorrow,
Its light and shade,
Its hope, that often promises to-morrow,
And yet, is ever, ever, on the borrow,
For debts unpaid.

TWILIGHT

It is the twilight hour,
Red in the west,
Glows the departing day.
Night cometh, dark and dour,
Toilers may rest,
And dream life's cares away,
Conquer life's sordid pow'r.

Sweet is this gloaming time,
To you and me.
How soft the shadows fall,
And 'tis an awe sublime,
Steals o'er the sea,
And o'er the landscape all.
How sweet is nature's chime.

Songs from the rip'ling sea,
Deep tone'd and free.
Songs from the darksome lea,
How rich and soft they be.
They bring to me
A quiet restful glee,
And the dark shadows flee.

Welcome the twilight spell,
That comes to all.
What joys it holdeth well
For us we may not tell.
Free'd from earth's thrall,
Ah! some day we shall dwell,
Beyond this twilight shell.

REAPING TIME

THE golden rod is blooming by the way,
The dogwood's blushing in the sun's bright glow,
The sumach crimson with its plumage gay,
Each field and meadow, with its waiting mow,
Unto the reaper calls,
" 'Tis reaping time."

The migrant tells of coming winter days,
And seeks afar another summer time,
A summer friend, he leaves us to our ways,
To save our crops mid dust, and reaping grime,
And yet, we welcome fall,
And reaping time.

The barn is full, now lusty stacks are seen,
Marshal'd in view of slowly homing herds.
They come with stately step, and quiet mien,
Regardless of the flight of summer birds,
For well they know the fall
Brings reaping time.

October pours the cream of all the year,
With lavish hand: she gives to man rich store,
Meadow and orchard yield with grace sincere,
The barn and bin have need to ask no more,
When we have gather'd all,
In reaping time.

THE AUTUMN RAIN

THE GOSPEL OF THE STORM

THE pitiless rain, it drearily pours
On a dark November day.
How I watch that rain, as the tempest roars,
While I safely keep within study doors,
As the daylight fades away.

In pelting storm, from my window I see,
Out in that riotous eve,
A bluebird, a robin; where is their glee?
As matins they sung, in the old pear tree,
Ere this tempest made them grieve.

Now, I list to the voice of poor bob white,
As through the dank grass he calls
For his gentle mate and her birdlings bright.

They wander'd away, in the fading light.
The pitiless rain still falls.

To the old pear tree the robin still clings,
The bluebird is loathe to go,
For the stump-hole, his home, no comfort brings,
No shelter hath he for his weary wings,
And his plaints are soft and low.

Oh, thou! who from Heav'n dost send the rain,
And the bleak November gale,
Shelterless creatures, on mountain and plain,
Are crying for help, shall they cry in vain?
Their cry but a needless wail?

Ah, no! by his breath he sendeth the frost,
The hail, the pitiless rain.
Yet to each creature he knoweth the cost:
Be it His decree, that a lamb be lost,
That lamb is not lost in vain.

For ev'ry dark day of pitiless rain
That falls on creature or sod,
For ev'ry dark hour of a needed pain,
He bringeth his sunlight, soothing, and gain,
That proves him a tender God.

The treasures of snow and of hail are thine,
And the gentle summer rain,
The pitiless storm hath a source divine,
And, after the storm, 'tis thy sunbeams shine,
And nothing is sent in vain.

Oh! thy clouds distill thine abundant grace,
 Though some dark days we may see.
To bluebird, robin, bob white, there's no place
So dark but thy tender hand they may trace.
 They know where their garner's be.

The garner's of God feed the sons of men,
 Though millionaires claim the gold.
His sunshine, His rain o'er mountain and glen;
O'er valley and field, o'er sheep-fold and pen,
 Bring largess, and life untold.

WHERE NOW THE GOLDEN EARS?

AN INDIAN LEGEND

FORTH from the centuries there comes a story,
It is a legend, out of the long ago,
An Indian princess, in robe of glory,
By her good spirit led to the waving corn,
Ripe with its gold and pearly grains, husks aglow,
Stood waiting reaping morn.

Gazing upon the scene, her heart rejoicing,
She had one thought, "how rich her sire in maize."
To her astonish'd ear, a promise voicing,
The spirit bade her, "gather the rich ripe corn,
And she should find jewels, far beyond praise,
Her person to adorn."

"But she could pass only once the golden way,
Nor ever turn to pluck the neglected ears,
Her footsteps could not linger, nor backward stray.
Go forward now, and gather the rich, ripe corn,
Nor must thou yield to wandering thoughts or fears,
Or heed the doubters' scorn."

Passing rich ears all fill'd with the golden grain,
She sought still richer ears; were they not beyond?
Rejecting many, fain would she try again,
"In such a field, I'll gather the rich, ripe corn,
To follow fancy, mayhap I'm over fond,
And yet, all fears I scorn."

Alas! her hast'ning steps are nearing the end,
And she hath left behind the choicest ripe ears.
Her weary feet, and her laggard steps attend
A heartless search, through the mildew'd ears of
corn.

Oh! ask her not, as she weepeth bitter tears,
"Where now the golden ears?"

GRAY DAYS

THE summer days are gone,
Those fragrant days
I loved so well.
The garden how forlorn:
Though autumn haze,
Weaveth her spell,
O'er browns and grays.

Some autumn skies are bright,
With golden hue,
And autumn flow'rs
Are now a grateful sight:
As bath'd in dew
(Tears of the night)
They greet thy view.

The hazy days have come,
And autumn shades
Are everywhere.
The farmer turns gray loam,
And in the glades,
Brown cat-tails are;
Bees make short raids:

For autumn's breath is chill,
Her winds so cold!
And seeking flow'rs
By rugged hill and rill,
Where sweets are dol'd,
Mid wind and show'rs
Is toil untold.

And with the dark gray days,
Must come the snow.
No pastures green,
Nor grateful shady ways,
Nor luscious mow,
By herds are seen,
These dark gray days.

And yet, in dark gray days,
By ingle bright,
We pass sweet hours,
Or, forth by freezing braes,
With keen delight—
Mid gloom or show'rs,
Find bright, earth's ways.

THE FADING LEAF

THE soft sweet autumn days are here.
Days bringing shine and show'r,
And, while we miss bright summer's cheer,
And all the bloom to maidens dear;
Yet autumn hath rich dow'r.

She bringeth harvest time to all.
How rich the russet corn
That gladdens ev'ry byre and stall,
When winter blasts shall loudly call,
Some future winter morn.

The cotton bolls no longer bloom,
But, turn'd to snow white locks,
Burst forth from cerements of gloom,
To seek some far off gin and loom,
Mingle with fleece of flocks.

The orchards rich with juicy store,
Of apples, gold, and red,
Are blooming, with a fruit mature,
That soon, within the bins secure,
Shall be, when autumn's fled.

With all its cheer and harvest song,
Autumn with fading leaf,
Prophetic is, 'twill not be long,
Ere chilling winds with trumpet tongue
Shall tell of winter's grief.

To man the fading leaf doth preach,
A sermon wise and true,
And doth a helpful lesson teach,
Of opportunities we reach,
That swiftly fade from view.

No life is always summer time,
With naught but joy and bloom,
But, with some days that are sublime,
Will come the days of chill and rime,
And days of winter gloom.

And as the leaf doth fade and fall,
So must we pass away.
But there is life, beyond the Pall,
For those who heed the Master's call.
We greet eternal day.

A THANKSGIVING SONG

November 20, 1907

OLD father time hath whirl'd the seasons round
With a deft master hand.
And now the autumn days, with many tinted rays,
Tell of the dying year in woodland ways
Or in the russet corn;
And, where the morning glories hang, limp and
forlorn.

Bright summer days brought fruitage from sweet
flow'rs,
And the soft tender rain
Gave promise that should bring to harvest hopes of
spring.
Thus giving weary toilers heart to sing
The merry harvest song,
When they should garner all, they waited for so
long.

We listen to the busy whirl of trade,
A merry bustling hum,
See many thousands toil: midst grime and smoke,
their moil,
But thankful hearts are looking up to God,
Their labor is no rod.
Willing of heart, they toil for home and native sod.

Oh, Master! thou who crownest all the year,
With goodness and rich store,
We thank thee for the bread, the orchards rich and
red,
The cotton fields, all white before us spread.
For all this garner'd good;
Our hearts would ever praise thy loving fatherhood.

There is a hush! and men are call'd to pray'r.
"Most hearty thanks to him
Who rules the rolling year; there is no day of
cheer—
No day of sorrow, or of sunshine clear—
But He doth wisely give."
Him should the people praise, and in Him daily
live.

Let songs ascend! and when within our homes,
Long parted ones unite,
And heart meets heart, sometimes a tear will start.
Those loving tears will leave no galling smart:
Bid sadness flee apace,
As households gather round the ingle "face to face."

SWEET SEPTEMBER

O MYSTIC time! that loving clings
Along the edge of summer.
The cotton picker's harvest time,
He picks, and sings some olden rhyme.
Thinks thee a welcome comer.

Welcome September, thou dost bring
From summer's heat, much blessing.
Soft are thy show'rs, and thou dost fling
O'er grassy mead and blooming ling,
Thy haze, so sweet, caressing.

The woodlands feel thy changeful breath,
Thy nights sometimes are chilling.
The russet leaves that tell of death
Are downward borne on stormy breath:
In raindrops oft distilling.

Come, sweet September! harvest time,
When toil brings glad fruition.
Thy orchard's yield is in its prime,
Thy blooms doth rival summertime,
Come! fill thy royal mission.

OCTOBER

THY skies are opaline,
The air is soft and sweet,
Like summer zephyrs blow in leafy June.
Where shall we draw the line,
When months and seasons meet?
Which shall we choose, June or October morn?

Oh, rich October mine!
Thine is the very prime
Of Autumn roses; and thou givest bloom
To golden rod: and thine,
The ruby vintage time.
How great thy treasure, and thy russet gloom.

Bright cosmos of the year,
With all the season's thine,
We love thy spring-like air, and thou dost give
Promise of summer cheer:
Thy soft, sweet days are fine—
And yet, we know, December draweth near.

WINTER

FROM WHENCE YE WINDS?

WINDS of the winter night,
Fierce, cold, and bleak are ye.
Shouting with giant might,
Nipping with chilling bite,
Smiting with chilling blight,
On land and sea.

Came ye from icy caves,
Far in the frozen seas?
Came ye in Polar waves,
From where dread winter raves,
All nature's own, thy slaves?
Praying surcease!

Winds of the spring-tide sweet,
Fresh from green shrub and tree,
Come with thy zephyr feet.
Thou hast a welcome mete,
Smiles shall thy coming greet,
How graciously.

Winds of the summer tide,
How sweet and gentle ye,
From where sweet flowers bide,
And crystal brooklets glide—
Where fragrant hearts-ease hide,
Come now to me.

Winds of the autumn glow,
Strong, crisp, and cool are ye.
For ye would have us know
Summer must quickly go,
Give place to coming snow
And winter's dree.

Winds have their mission true,
Come they with wintry blast,
Or when violets blue,
Sprinkled with early dew,
Exhale spring's breath for you,
When winter's past.

VIOLETS IN THE SNOW

THE north wind comes so keen and cold,
The bright blue sky dark clouds enfold,
Blotting out the sunset glow.
And as the twilight fades away,
There comes a breath of freezing spray—
Oh! it tells of coming snow.

Through door and hall the chill still creeps,
Into each cranny storm king peeps,
I sit by my fire light glow,
Thinking of loved ones far away,
Thinking of homeless ones who stray
From home in this pelting snow.

Thinking too of violets sweet,
Under my windows, at my feet,
 Oh! how bright were they that morn,
Now what their fate, as winter's breath
Comes nipping, chill, does it mean death
 To my violets forlorn?

'Tis early dawn; a stormy night
Has pass'd away with morning light.
 I to my violets go.
All earth is clad in robes of white,
My violets are out of sight,
 Deep hidden beneath the snow.

How soft the blanket o'er that bed,
As soft as any lamb's wool spread.
 Were my flowers warm below?
Gently I lift the coverlet,
My violets, they were not dead;
 Just sleeping, beneath the snow.

And as I pluck'd a bunch or two,
There came an odor sweet and true,
 Like the fragrant breath of spring.
I kiss'd those violets so blue,
Their sweets no other flow'ret knew.
 Their praises I gladly sing.

THE OLD YEAR AND THE NEW

1908-9

OLD Year, thou art gone, with thy records and
treasure,

No more to return.

The new is at hand, with its toil and its leisure,
Its bounty, from him who doth give without
measure,

Soul, wait thou and learn.

Learn from the old year, there is never a sorrow

That comes to us here

That hath not its dawning of joy on the morrow,
Nor should we those vexatious troubles now borrow,
That never appear.

The seasons shall come, bringing bounty and beauty,
With good in each day.

While we shall as surely meet trial and duty:

And, sometimes, a blighting, where crops should be
fruity,

Have faith ev'ry day.

Looking upward in faith, may there be no repining,
The Master is true.

Beyond ev'ry storm-cloud the sun is still shining;
Behold on its edges, a bright silver lining,
A bit of the blue.

New year, we would greet thee, with smile and with
gladness,

Whatever thy store.

With grace may we welcome thy joy and thy
sadness,

The Master sends nothing in malice or madness,
Whatever thy score.

New year, thou art welcome, with all thou art
bringing,

Whatever it be.

While hearts are all blythe, and the joy bells are
ringing;

With hope I look upward, my heart will be singing,
What's best, I shall see.

LITTLE WHITE ANGELS

"MY little white angels dancing in the air!

My little white angels every, every where."

Thus said little Daisy as she watched the snow.

"Dear little white angels, everywhere you go.

"On the mighty tree tops, see them crowding there,
Fleecy clouds of angels, floating in the air.

How they turn their partners, in the mazy whirl,
Romp just as gaily, as a little girl."

Snowy little angels, they are fresh from Heav'n,

Coming from *the Master* with a message giv'n,

"Though your sins are scarlet, we would let you
know

He will make you whiter than the driven snow."

Daisy read the message from the angels bright,
As she watched them dancing in the waning light.
"Thank you, little angels," said her loving heart,
"And I give you welcome, grieve when you depart."

THE SUNLIGHT ON THE SNOW

NEAR eventide, the sun is sinking low
Toward the western hills; the sky is all aglow
With rosy shades, of such resplendent light
As winter sunset gives, ere comes the night.

Some clouds are there, and many rainbow tints;
From these, the artist gathers many hints.
And as we gaze, the picture grows apace.
Its beauty lights with smiles my lassie's face.

"See! See!" she cries, "'tis like the gates of Heav'n!
See gleams of glory, where the clouds are riv'n.
'Tis thus the Master sometimes lets us know
What lies beyond the sunlight and the snow."

Long years have pass'd like yesterday to me,
And yet how well that sunset scene I see.
Life's evening comes: a bright and tender glow
That far transcends that sunlight on the snow.

THE ANGEL SONG

WATCHING their flocks through the lonely hours
That winter night in the long ago,
The shepherds awake all their drowsy pow'rs;
Behold a strange light though the darkness glow'rs;
They gaze on a star they did not know.

Watching with awe this wonderful sight,
Fearing some evil they could not fend,
The shepherds, seeing that star so bright
Shining o'er Bethlehem town, that night—
Mayhap did think that "the world would end."

But hark! now they hear a choral song,
And—whence comes this wond'rous harmony?
See glist'ning wings—an angelic throng,
They hover o'er them—no mortal tongue
Ever voiced such soulful melody.

"Glory to God in the highest height!
Unto you is born this day a king.
Redeemer who bringeth life and light,
And joy, and peace, to the world to-night.
Sing! favor'd sons of men—Oh, sing!"

And when the angels had gone away
Into the Heav'ns through portals bright,
In voices low did the shepherds say:
"We leave our sheep in fold—and away:
We go to Bethlehem town to-night."

The star is shining so bright and clear,
They cannot fail to follow the light.
And now to Bethlehem's Inn draw near,
With tim'rous step, and expectant fear:
They should Emanuel see, that night.

"A child of days" in a manger laid,
A lowly babe, and a Nazarene.
On Him the hopes of a world are staid,
For Him humanity long had pray'd:
The lowly shepherds their king had seen.

So the sweet evangel soon was told,
The shepherds, returning, praises sung—
Beginning a song that never grows old,
A song that is sung to harps of gold—
By the ransom'd ones of ev'ry tongue.

SONGS OF HEART AND HOME

THE INNERMOST

THE Norseman hath a welcome for the guest,
Who bides beneath the shelter of his home,
With gladness he bestoweth cheer and rest,
And you, his friend, his Innermost become.

Within each loyal heart there is a spot,
Approach'd alone by one who holds the key.
'Tis rich in treasure, stranger findeth not,
However searchful, though, that search may be.

Sweet Innermost! how restful, how serene
The quiet haven thou dost offer me.
When spirit-tried, by many a stormy scene,
I leave life's wave-toss'd sea, and turn to thee.

Pure Innermost! no selfish thought intrudes.
Within our sacred fane Love holds the key.
Here comes no strife, and here no sorrow broods,
That e'er shall separate my love from me.

Sad, sad, indeed! the life that knows no love,
Or, having loved, hath lost that inner life.
A lonely waif, like Noah's weary dove,
He seeks some resting place from toil and strife.

IN THE SHADOW

I'm sitting in the shadow of the years,
I'm counting up life's sorrows and its tears,
Its gladsome days, delusive hopes, and fears,
Of long ago.

Once life was bright and full of joyous song,
Once life to me seem'd ever right; not wrong.
Ah! I had then not felt the thorny prong
Of human woe.

For ev'ry day of sunshine I have seen,
For ev'ry promis'd joy I've chanced to glean,
For hope beyond life's shadow and its sheen,
Its sunset glow,

I thank my God who sits enthron'd on high,
And watcheth with a tender Father's eye
Our trials; that shall vanish bye and bye,
When Heav'n we know.

Till then, beneath the shadow of the years,
I'll wait until all shadow disappears,
Until—from weary human eyes, all tears
Shall cease to flow.

PEBBLES

As in the sunset glow I walk'd the strand,
My heart athrill with many hopes and fears,
I toss'd a pebble from an idle hand
Into the waves that danced along the sand:
The thrill awoke on shores of stranger-land.

'Tis thus we stand upon the shores of time,
And idly play with moments as they fly;
To thoughtful souls, each moment is sublime.
'Tis but a step, by which we higher climb
Toward the goal, away from earth and crime.

Or we should count each moment but a wave,
To bear us upward in our cruise toward Heav'n.
Should storms arise, the Master can outbrave
The stormy billows: He alone can save,
And grant at last all that our souls should crave.

OUR INGLE GLOW

THE poets sing of the winter time,
With snow-clad hills and mountains.
They phrase in smooth, and rythmic rhyme,
Earth's frozen dew and fountains.

The fleecy snow is cold, we know.
The breeze that brings it, freezing.
The landscapes, robed in gowns of snow,
To artist eyes are pleasing.

When comes to me these winter days,
Give me, beneath the shingle,
The bright and cheery winter blaze
That warms the cozy ingle.

And thus our winter hours are bright,
When earth and air are chilling,
When through the dreary winter night,
Cold nature's pulse is stilling.

Our hearts must gather 'round the spot,
The ever dear old ingle.
Nor must one loved one be forgot.
With love let mem'ries mingle.

Life's storms may come: e'en though the snow
May wrap the world in sadness,
While chill and fierce the north winds blow,
Our ingle glow brings gladness.

IS IT NOTHING TO THEE?

GETHSEMANE's gaiden, near Olive's dark brow,
Doth shelter a king: Is it nothing to thee
That men would dethrone Him? in agony now
He prays, with the oozing of blood from his brow.
Is it nothing to thee?

He stands before Pilate, accused and alone,
And Judas is there—is it nothing to thee
That Judas and Peter their Master disown?
That he should leave Heaven, his crown and his
throne

For a sinner like thee?

The crime of the ages! he hangs on the tree,
Forsaken, he dies—is it nothing to thee?
O, traitor and scoffer! how hard thou must be.
Ah! why should the Master have suffer'd such dree
For a sinner like thee?

The tints of the morning are gilding the sky,
And Mary and Peter and John seek to see
The spot where they laid him, with fear and with
sigh.
A live-Christ was found, where a dead-Christ did
die—

Is it nothing to thee?

A dawning of glory awaits all who trust
The risen Redeemer, who hung on the tree.
No longer a prisoner to death and to dust,
A King in His beauty, He reigns o'er the just—
Is it nothing to thee?

SLEEP

A STRANGE, mysterious alchemist art thou,
Oh, sleep!
For thou dost take a worn and weary thing,
All wrung with care, all mar'd, and thou dost bring
Surcease from pain, repose to weary brain,
Oh, sleep!

Thy gentle touch, a loving angel art,
Oh, sleep!
For thou dost comfort bring the weary heart,
And bidding sorrow for a while depart,
Thy balmy bath obscures our rugged path,
Oh, sleep!

Come, with thy rosy dreams and zephyr breath,
Oh, sleep!
E'en though thou be like thy twin sister, death,
Thou hast no tears and thy soft wings beneath
Tried souls may for a while their woes beguile,
Oh, sleep!

Soft, low, and sweet, thy gladsome joy-bells ring,
Oh, sleep!

Whilst clear from out the past come echoing
Sweet words to me that whilom mem'ries bring,
As if life all were spring, and knew no sting,
Oh, sleep!

Guerdon for faithful toil, art thou, oh, friend,
And sleep
Is ever sweetest, as our days shall end
In duty done: while brain and heart unbend,
And we bright golden moments with thee spend,
Oh, sleep!

RAV'LINGS

A PILE of rav'lings, from the warp and woof of
days—

'Tis all the years have left to me.
Where now the rich gay patterns, worn in youthful
ways,
Mid sighs and glee?

Here are some rav'lings, gay with dyes of wondrous
hue,
And mem'ry weaves for me anew
The garments worn by one in days when love
was true,
And love was new.

Yea, that bright autumn eve long years ago we met,
And heart touch'd heart, it was for aye.
These rav'lings picture to my clinging mem'ry yet
That closing day.

Those glossy pearl gray threads, like some cloud-
shotted sky,

Those rosy ones, like sunset glow.

The blue is but a flash from sweetest eyes that I
Shall ever know.

Here be some fleecy threads, a faded orange bloom,
And here some threads of glossy black:

They tell me of the day of bridal and the tomb—
Then, all's a wrack!

'Tis thus we read our past: the many threads of
life

Make up the warp and woof of days,
And we our garments wear, of joy or bitter strife:
He guides our ways.

This pile of rav'lings, full of tender thoughts and
sweet,

Are treasures richer far than gold;
Among these threads, I whilom friends and
mem'ries meet
That ne'er grow old.

BEYOND

WE may not know why our most ardent hope
Is blighted like some bloom by early frost,
And we are left in sadness as we grope
Like children in the dark, crying, "Lost! Lost!"

We may not know why some bright promise fails,
And we are left to sigh, "It might have been;"

And earthly joys seem but as idle tales,
While our best things are touched with blight of
sin.

Ah, yes! we may not know the reason now;
Cheer up, brave heart, why should God's child
despond?
Look up from shadows deep to Calv'ry's brow,
And trust thy Father for a bright Beyond.

ETERNITY

BEFORE the morning stars together sung
In joyous chorus with the sons of God;
Before all suns their radiant rays had flung
Athwart the ages, or an angel trod
The sparkling depths of space,
Thou hadst thy being, Oh, Eternity!

When forth upon its march our little earth,
In rhythmic step with other rolling spheres,
Begun its song of fruitfulness and mirth,
Received its sunshine or its clouds in tears:
Beyond those mystic years,
Thou hadst thy being, Oh, Eternity!

Æonian ages past and yet to come,
May strew the milky way with starry dust,
And Father Time, grown weary of the sum
Of years, his scythe well worn, laid by to rust:
Beyond life's loves, life's lust,
Thou hadst thy being, Oh, Eternity.

When the last trump shall sound its startling blast,
And fiery heat shall melt our homes of clay;
When other worlds, their whilom glories past,
Shall in the wreck of matter drift away.
Beyond, beyond life's day,
Thou art eternal, Oh, Eternity!

CONTRASTS

POOR

WITHOUT a home, to stocks and bonds a stranger—
Stranger alike to plenty and to gold:
The Master walk'd the earth, mid toil and danger;
By cruel men was scourg'd, was bought, was sold.

RICH

Oh, holy Son of God! call'd poor in treasure:
Whilst thou didst dwell among the sons of men
'Thine hand controls estates men cannot measure—
All worlds are thine, and wealth beyond our ken.

WHISPERINGS

It is the twilight hour.
I sigh for rest
From sordid place and pow'r,
Man's daily quest.
A holy calm is mine,
And thinking o'er
Life's purposes divine,

From yonder shore
Come whisperings.

I hear a tender voice,
Loved long ago,
Saying, "Thou must rejoice—
I love thee so
That I would have thee climb
Away from greed
Toward the life sublime,
In word and deed."
Blest whisperings!

"Thou art a triune man.
Heart, brain, and soul,
Have made thee more than clay.
Press for the goal.
Immortal honor waits
Thee in that day
When through the golden gates,
Purg'd of thy clay,
Thou meetest me.

"I mingle with thy friends
In this fair land,
Where naught of earth offends.
We understand
Why thorn and bramble grew
Along the way
Each weary pilgrim knew
From day to day,
In wanderings.

“And in this twilight tryst
I ask for thee
All that my love dost wist
That thou shouldst be.
Then in life’s latest hour
Immortal seed
Shall bring immortal flow’r
Attentive heed—
My whisperings.”

THE BEAUTIFUL PINES

THE beautiful pines lift their crests to-day,
As they wave their plumes in a stately way.
Each needle quivers as the soft winds play,
And sings in sweet chorus a roundelay.
Oh! list to the beautiful pines.

Again do they sing me a restful song,
As I lie ’neath their shadow all day long,
And dream of the right and grieve o’er the wrong
That comes in a lifetime: shadows grow long,
While I list to thy song, Oh, Pines!

And oft at night, when the wild winds play,
And bend thy plumes in a masterful way,
While storm clouds martial in dread array,
Thy voice, like old ocean’s waves at bay,
Sing me a battle song, Oh, Pines!

I hear thy bugle notes, deep, wild and clear,
Now far away on the cold midnight air;
Now coming nearer, the trumpet notes blare,
With tones like a lion aroused from his lair—

I sleep not, for list'ning, Oh, Pines!

The storm passes by, the day dawn is bright,
The joy of the morning eclipses the night;
Thy plumes with snowflakes are fleecily white,
They sparkle like gems in the dazzling light,
Oh, beautiful, beautiful Pines!

But when the soft breezes in spring-tide blow,
Nature awakes from her sleep 'neath the snow,
And bright flowers smile in the sunlight glow,
Ah! how sweet is thy breath, as I rest below,

On my soft bed of tags, dear Pines.

All seasons are thine, my own evergreen;
I love thy green plumes with their glossy sheen,
In spring or summer, when autumn is seen,
Or when winter breezes blow in between

Thy needles, my beautiful Pines.

The chestnut with fruitage is rich, oh, Pine!
The oak spreads its tent, when the sun doth shine,
The beech, ash, and hickory, all are mine,
But I love thee best, as I now recline

'Neath thy shadow, beautiful Pine.

MILKING TIME

SLOWLY the cows are leaving now the clover,

For Ben, the cow-boy, bids them homeward go:

"Come, Buttercup, and Blossom, Pied and Rover—

'Tis milkin' time, dat sun is gittin' low."

“Ole Miss, she watch dat slowly creepin’ shad’er
Along de fence, an’ ’cross de pasture path;
She lookin’ now ter see us leave de meader,
Be quick! er she will ’splay her wrathy wrath.”

“We mus’n’t fool no time, fer she is watchin’;
Be at de cup-pen bars when we git dar—
Come, Blossom, take de lead, an’ go ‘a scotchin’,’
Er ole Miss’ fingers sho will pull my he’ar.”

The summer sun is bathing clouds in beauty,
As now he sinks behind the western hills;
And Blossom’s bell leads well the herd to duty,
The milkmaid all her vessels quickly fills.

Ben, waiting now upon the milkmaid’s pleasure,
Bears on his head and in both hands a pail,
With steady step (losing no drop of treasure),
Following Dicey, leaves the cow-pen rail.

The foaming milk soon finds within the dairy,
Beside the spring, a cool, delightful place;
While Ben with art beguiles his dusky fairy,
And takes a drink with far more zeal than grace.

Those olden times, when Dicey ruled the dairy,
And Ben was cow-boy, were too bright to stay.
“Ole Mistis,” too, whom they then thought con-
trary,
They cherish still, though she hath pass’d away.

THE INNER ROOM

IN ev'ry home there is a sacred spot
Dear to all dwellers there.
The ingle where, earth's cares a while forgot,
We mingle hearts in pray'r.

Where'er we roam, through years o'er land or sea,
And make a dwelling-place,
No spot becomes more dear to you or me
Than childhood's "Throne of Grace."

Mem'ry recalls the hour of evening pray'r,
As twilight closes day;
A voice (now silent) trembles on the air
And bears our souls away.

Away from earth, from childhood's grief and pain,
Bringing sore hearts sweet peace.
Ah! mem'ry makes old children young again.
Bids present worries cease.

This inner-room, bless'd ingle of the home,
Our hearts would cling to thee;
Nor may we from our hallow'd mem'ries roam,
Where'er our homes may be.

THE CROWDED INN

IN groups along the hills of Galilee,
By Jordan's reedy banks and shady fens,
Once more to crowd the courts and gladly see
Zion—one look for days of toil amends.

The sun was seeking rest o'er distant hills,
A lonely pair had journey'd far that day.
And as the coming night all nature stills,
They reach at last a village by the way.

'Tis Bethlehem, sweet home of other days.
"Now we shall rest," to Mary loving thought.
Ah! Joseph little knew Jehovah's ways—
That night was to our world with blessings
fraught.

The Inn was crowded, not a place was found
For one who should be mother of the King.
The Priests and Levites, noble lords around,
Glance at the weary pair, a wondering.

"Pray who are these, who lodging seeketh here?"
Questions some Priest or carping loiterer.
"Joseph of Nazareth, the carpenter,
And Mary: they in pelf are very poor."

"No room! no room! there's lodging in the stalls,"
The landlord cries: and Joseph seeks a place
Among the cows. Within those stable walls
Was born a King, Redeemer of the Race.

From out the gloom there shines a brilliant star,
Its beams are brightest on the manger spot.
The wise men swiftly coming from afar
Pay homage to the King—"cast in their lot."

And now the angel hosts join in a song,
"For to our earth is born a Savior King.
Peace and good will shall drive away the wrong,
And to his people sweetest joy shall bring."

A group of shepherds, watching flocks by night,
With wonder gaze and hear the angel song.
With joy they follow now the star so bright
Which came to tell of one expected long.

The crowded inn no place for Jesus found,
His cradle but a manger in the stall,
His natal song is sung the world around—
Some day his life, his love, shall conquer all.

BEHIND THE FROWN A SMILE

LIFE seems at best a crooked thing,
To some folk.
A crass and an uncanny thing,
To some folk.
Ah! 'tis because they see the frown
In all things,
And life to them seems upside down
In all things.

Oh! could they see "behind the frown,"
Those sad folk;
Reverse their view from upside down,
What glad folk
They might become: for there's a smile
In all things,
And much to brighten and beguile
In all things.

So we will see the sunny side
Of all things.
There is a flow in ev'ry tide,
And all things
Are brighter than they look to be;
So banish frown,
Nor let us seek all things to see
Upside down.

WAITING

A GIRL, aflush with life and hope,
With quick impatient feet, is waiting.
With agile grace of antelope
She fain would climb some sunny slope
Instead of "waiting, waiting, waiting."

A merry lad all full of joy
Strains at his leash, while he is waiting.
His earnest heart would limbs employ,
His ev'ry movement, restless boy,
Rebels at "waiting, waiting, waiting."

But Father Time is not in haste,
Nor must they waste his treasure waiting;
Must not be satisfied with paste,
Where diamonds flash, and they may taste
Good things in "waiting, waiting, waiting."

The girl, a maiden fair to see,
With grace and beauty, still is waiting
For something that is yet to be.
Oh! how in glad expectancy
Doth she stand "waiting, waiting, waiting."

The lad, no longer waiting he,
For he hath treasure found while waiting,
And now, with hope and gladsome glee,
He shows her that which she might be,
And ends the waiting.

FOREGLEAMS

WHEN earthly tents are moving day by day
In search of pastures green,
And we grow weary of our foot-worn way,
And long for the unseen,

'Tis then the eye of faith gives a foregleam,
And ere Heaven's portals close,
We catch a glimpse of how our home will seem
When comes our last repose.

'Tis thus through blighted hopes foregleams shall
 come
 To mortals tempest driv'n,
And we at last shall reach, through storms, the home
 Where all is peace—our Heav'n.

UNDER THE EAVES

I HAVE a neighbor dwelling close to me,
 Under the eaves.
She seeks no home in boughs of orchard tree,
Where other birds find haven, no not she!
 Though thick the leaves.

She hath laid tribute on some cotton boll,
 And with it weaves
Straw and small twigs, a little wool hath stole;
With dainty beak and feet she shreds the whole,
 All mix'd with leaves.

Here she doth build her nest, feeling secure,
 Beneath my eaves.
For quiet Jennie Wren is very sure
We will not thwart her plans, now so mature—
 Her nest she weaves.

So here, from year to year, her little brood,
 Under our eaves,
Find a safe refuge, love our neighborhood,
And here, protected, seek a home and food
 From our sheaves.

STEPPING STONES

YOUNG life is ever climbing, reaching up
To grasp some goal beyond the present touch.
'Tis just beyond they see a tempting cup,
Fill'd well with blessing that awaits their clutch.

Still upward is the glance of man or maid,
Beyond the zenith though they may have pass'd,
Each year a stepping stone that shall but aid
To reach some blessed, look'd-for goal at last.

Each duty done is but a stepping stone;
From it we climb to something better won.
Naught that we have is for "our very own,"
'Tis *borrow'd*, as the moon doth from the sun.

BEHIND THE PURPLE HILLS

THERE was a home behind the purple hills,
I loved it well.
An humble home, and how my heart now thrills
Its charms to tell.

There dwelt in tender love, for many years,
Those parents dear,
Who led my erring heart, mid smiles and tears,
To hope and fear.

To hope for brighter days, when I should win
The goal I sought.
To fear the thorny path that leads to sin,
They wisely taught.

How sweet it was, around the ingle bright
 With lamps aglow,
To gather on some dark and stormy night,
 Earth clad with snow,

And hear our sire some thrilling story tell
 Of days gone by;
While mother croons what baby knew so well:
 Her lullaby.

Shut in behind those cloud-clad purple hills,
 Our childhood days
Pass'd swiftly by. Home hath its joys and ills,
 As part our ways.

The sparkling waters of the placid Dan
 Sing through those hills.
While cooling breezes come and gently fan
 Away life's ills.

How sweet the joy, when golden mem'ries greet
 Those purple hills!
The home, where hallow'd mem'ries ever meet,
 My spirit thrills.

A TOUCH OF ROSY SUNSET

A TOUCH of rosy sunset
Now rests upon my brow.
It knows not clime nor season,
But glows as brightly, now
When wintry blasts are blowing
As in the springtide sweet,
Or when the summer sunset
Doth balmy twilight greet.

A touch of rosy sunset
Doth oft to zenith climb.
Its rays embloom the star depths
With radiance sublime,
And o'er all nature sendeth
A sheen of rosy light
Before the shadows gather
That tell of coming night.

Thus may life's rosy sunset
Be mine when, free from clay,
I gladly greet the dawning
Of Heaven's eternal day,
When, leaving earth-bound portals,
I soar to endless joy
And there with Heav'n's immortals
Join in their glad employ.

MISTS

MISTS, ye are nature's dreams,
And as ye veil
The landscape, we have evanescent gleams,
Now bright, now pale,
Of valleys, mountains, and clear flashing streams,
Or distant sail.

We watch thy floating towers—
Fancy will trace
A palace, with its many-shaded bow'rs,
Or see some face,
Reminding us of long past happy hours,
Return'd apace.

Mists do not always enshroud
The scenes we view,
But we behold a fleecy sunlit cloud,
Its pink and blue.
Its filmy beauty, rare and well endow'd,
We may see through.

Mists to this world of ours
Enchantment lend.
At times they do distill like gentle show'rs
And downward send
Upon the thirsty, waiting, patient flow'rs
Nature's own blend.

Ah! then 'tis sweet to see
New bloom awake,

And ev'ry plant and flow'r from drought set free,
New vigor take.
A welcome mist thou art, to plant and tree—
Bless'd for thy sake.

Come, then, O! mists, to earth,
For ye are sent
To bless and beautify, to give new birth.
I am content
To greet thy mystic touch, recount thy worth
On nature spent.

And as the mists bring life
To mother earth,
So doth the holy spirit bring to man,
Mid stress and dearth,
New life; gives strength to conquer in the strife—
'Tis a new birth.

THE ECHO OF A SONG

How sweet the songs of long ago,
As they are echo'd back to me.
How rich their soft and rhythmic flow,
Lighting my heart with love's bright glow,
They echo, "long ago."

"The Lighthouse" shines with cheerful glow,
Tom Moore hath here a gem of art.
No song more beautiful I know;
It stirs the fountains, and they flow.
It echoes, "long ago."

There is a song, I loved it so,
'Tis link'd with happy days of yore :
Oh! "Home Sweet Home," words are too poor
To tell of Home that is no more.
 They echo, "long ago."

"The Bridge," how much to thee I owe,
For mem'ry reaches yonder shore,
Brings back the voices of yore,
That I shall hear on earth no more.
 Oh! days of "long ago."

Beneath the bridge the river's flow
Is onward to the mighty sea,
And passing tides of human woe
Watch light and shade and sunset glow,
 And think of "long ago."

Another song so soft and low,
Its echo ever sweet to me,
'Tis "Evening Bells," I well did know
One voice that in the evening's glow
 Did sing it "long ago."

Those mother songs I well did know.
New songs are not the same to me.
The old come now with rhythmic flow,
My heart is list'ning, all aglow,
 To songs of "long ago."

“SAINT DISTAFF’S DAY”

A day when Christmas tide shall have passed, and
men and maidens, in “ye olden time,” came back to
the work-a-day world.

THE merry round of Christmas joy is over,
The ashes on the hearth
Are left to tell us now of friend or lover,
Who from the ingle is mayhap a rover,
And longs for Yule-tide mirth.

How rich the joy when from some distant shealing
The scatter’d ones come home,
And there recount a loving Father’s dealing;
All through the year were daily mercies stealing,
Where e’re they’d roam.

Ah! now the glad reunion days are ended;
The toilers must afar;
Each to their waiting, needing field hath wended,
For them no earthly labor is suspended,
Each beareth labor’s scar.

Ye maidens, with all thrift and true devotion,
Welcome Saint Distaff’s Day.
Begin the year, and spin with graceful motion,
Or brew, or bake: to ev’ry hand some portion,
And lighten labor’s way.

Saint Distaff's Day! "Ye farmers speed the seeding
Of winter's grain, that ye
May feast the flocks and herds, supply their needing,
When scant the barn and bin of other feeding,
When early spring ye see.

Saint Distaff's Day! When toilers cease from
pleasure,
And face the coming days;
When earnest thrift dethrones our lazy leisure,
When industry doth give no stinted measure
In all man's busy ways.

But Yuletide comes again, we give it greeting,
When sunder'd hearts have met.
The days between in labor spent are fleeting;
Then, oh, the joy! when, round the Ingle meeting,
Saint Distaff we forget.

"IN THE HOUSE OF MY PILGRIMAGE"

"IN the house of my pilgrimage," dwelling to-day,
How sweet to recall all the joys of my life.
And I gladly remember each friend by the way,
That cheer'd my sad heart amid sorrow and strife.

To the house of my pilgrimage came many friends,
And each brought a chalice, all fill'd to the brim.
And as I remember, fond memory lends
A charm to those days that no sorrow can dim.

Soon "the house of my pilgrimage" passeth away;
No more shall my visage be seen among men.
Oh! 'tis thus with all dwellers in cumbering clay—
Only remembered by what we have been.

Let us live, while we live, so that others may see,
There is something beyond all the glamour of life.
A bright future of glory, for you and for me,
Beyond all the weeping, beyond all the strife.

SIC TRANSIT

THE ages are passing, the years, one by one,
Are counted by moments with each rising sun.
The Master would have us use moments to-day
With diligence, knowing they soon pass away.

In silence time marches, a chance of to-day
May never again come to brighten our way.
Some pilgrim may pass us, in need and despair;
A word may give comfort, remove want and care.

Sweet Mary of Bethany liveth to-day,
A blessing to toilers now passing this way:
Because a bright welcome, to heart and to home,
She gave to the Master, who homeless did roam.

The foxes have holes, and the wild beasts their lair;
The birds have their nests, and their freedom from
care.

But Jesus, the Master, no shelter or bed,
But such as man offer'd his grief-stricken head.

Oh, ye who in ease, and in luxury dwell,
And say to your souls, "All is well, all is well,"
Just remember, one day our Master will say,
"No longer a steward, to others give way."

I'd rather some cabin should shelter my head,
And rest in a grave with no stone when I'm dead,
Than dwell in a palace, unblessing, unbless'd,
And have *at the last*, only Death for my guest.

Far better have written, in letters of gold,
When the years of my toiling here have been told,
"Though poor, rich in good works, he ever hath
giv'n
His best, while he toil'd, for the Kingdom of
Heav'n."

THE OLD HALL CLOCK

"TICK-TOCK! tick-tock!" says the quaint hall clock,
And its faithful hands so old
Mark'd time for mine eye in the days gone by—
How many the hours they told.

In the long ago, that old hall clock
Was as faithful as to-day.
How I loved to hear its tones so clear,
In the years now far away!

Its voice gave welcome to hearth and home,
For a bride of long ago,
In its tones so dear, and full of cheer,
A message that all might know.

"Tick-tock! tick-tock! I'm just an old clock.
But my face and voice are true.
And I wish to say, in my quaint way,
How gladly I welcome you."

The bride hath become a matron gray,
While the clock hath counted years.
Some of her loved ones have pass'd away,
Embalmed with her heart's rich tears.

Others are coming, with hast'ning feet,
As the eager years rush by.
Again would they greet that mother sweet,
And gaze in her loving eye.

Just an old clock, but how very dear
Is thy mem'ry now to me.
Thy chime so sweet, I can no more greet,
But I love to think of thee.

ASLEEP

'Twas in a churchyard old,
Mid shadows deep,
Where marble shafts, so cold,
Dim records keep:

I wander'd all alone,
One summer day.
Read tributes carv'd in stone,
That mortals pay
To those who "sleep their sleep"
In beds of clay,
While stricken hearts here weep
And often pray.

Here lies a man who wrought,
From day to day,
To better self—who sought
To have his way.
The tablet saith that he
"Was leal and true,
And ever sought to see
As Christians do."
Beneath this tomb there lies
A mother dear,
And she hath closed her eyes
Without a fear.

For in her home no strife
Had found a place,
And all her earthly life
Was full of grace.
"Asleep in Jesus," here
A baby lies;
A mother's bitter tears,
Her sobs, her cries,
Could not the Reaper stay,
Nor bid depart

The blow that smote that day
A mother's heart.

"Asleep," a lovely girl.
No more on earth
Will she in social whirl
And boasted birth
Make happy hearts and home,
Bid sadness flee;
Her feet no longer roam
In gladsome glee.
Sweet be thy sleep, fair one;
We miss thee sore,
Thy pure bright life is done.
Rest evermore.

Tread softly, for this sod
Doth safely keep
An aged child of God
In peaceful sleep.
His children bless the day
That saw his birth;
Here rests his mortal clay,
In Mother Earth.
But when the gladsome call
Wakes those that sleep,
Then, free from prison thrall,
Lov'd ones shall keep
Beyond earth's snares and cares,
A tryst of joy:
For they, as Heaven's heirs,
Have Heaven's employ.

BY THE INGLE LIGHT

THE sun hath gone to light with beams of glory
The under world beyond the distant west,
Leaving the stars to tell creation's story,
While weary men would seek, from toil, glad rest.

'Tis sweet at gloaming time to seek the ingle,
Its light bids carking care and darkness flee,
And there, with loyal hearts, we sit and mingle,
Together hold a whilom jubilee.

The shadows dance, and dainty baby fingers
Make rabbit pictures on the fire-lit wall;
At last she sleepy grows, a smile still lingers
Around her lips, she nods "Good night to all."

How bright doth mem'ry paint the dear old ingle
Where childhood days were spent so long ago.
What happy hearts grew old 'neath homestead
shingle
That shelter'd us when life was all aglow.

Down to old age, the ingle light is gleaming,
And as we pass the last dark shadow'd way,
We meet the light from Heav'n's ingle streaming
That bids us welcome to Eternal day.

CROSSING THE LINE

THERE is a line that crosseth life somewhere,
When we would seem to leave the best behind,
And looking forward, seek some goal to find,
We pray that fate would grant us less of care,
Give us more joy, and earthly good, somewhere.
Where is that line? Will crossing prove unkind?
Or shall we greater, better things there find?
Crossing, our cares grow light, we breathe sweet
air.

Crossing the line means nearing Heav'n's gate,
Where we shall lay our earthly burthen down,
Exchange our cross for victor's song and crown.
For such reward, how gladly do we wait,
Nor should our hearts grow weary or repine,
But hail the day when we shall cross the line.

DINNA FORGET

WHEN thou shalt place thy name in letters bright,
High on the arch of fame,
And still art climbing, striving yet to write
Across the top thy name,
Remember those who led thy youthful feet,
Gave thee the home that served to make thee mete.
Dinna forget.

There was a time the way seem'd rough and steep;
Just feebly thou couldst stand.
And lo! o'er waves of trouble, sad and deep,
There came a helping hand.
A friendly grasp imparted nerve to do
Some deed that chang'd the trend of life for you.
Dinna forget.

Oh! 'tis a noble soul that keeps a shrine
For friends of early days;
Who lets no treasure of the mart or mine
So warp his earthly ways
That he neglects the friends of other days;
His heart yet sweetly sings their loving praise.
Dinna forget.

Sweet is the life that scatters light and love,
Lifts from some weary heart
The yoke of care, that bids them look above,
Eases life's galling smart.
To such, whate'er may be their earthly gain,
Friends will be leal and e'en in joy or pain,
Will na forget.

When thou hast quaff'd the cup of human joy
From brim to muddy lees,
Hast gather'd wealth, gain'd luxuries that cloy,
Kept many jubilees.
Remember, life is childhood, only, here.
The life worth while awaits beyond the bier.
Dinna forget.

WHEN THE COWS COME HOME

SWEET is the summer sunset hour,
When o'er the pastures green,
Departing rays, a golden show'r,
Are touching ev'ry fragrant flow'r
Along the footpath seen.

The herd-boy calls, the lowing kine
Across the pasture gaze.
Some to the call do not incline,
The leader gives an answ'ring sign,
And ceases now to graze.

Slowly her tinkling bell rings out,
The herd no longer roam.
They heed the herd-boy's merry shout,
Each wanderer hath turned about.
"The cows are coming home."

The path lies through a clover field;
With leaf and blossom rare,
It is a rich and tempting yield,
The stragglers linger yet afield
To pluck such dainty fare.

Slowly they climb the hillside way,
Enter the barnyard gate.
As slowly sinks the dying day,
The gentle herd, without one stray,
The milkmaid now await.

And now, as twilight shadows fall,
I gaze on earth's rich loam,
And fancy hears the herd-boy's call,
I see the open byre and stall.
"The cows are coming home."

NAE NICHT FA'S THERE

THE shadows creep along the sheelin' wa',
The mirk e'en as a tent doth cover a',
Thus ha'e we nicht, till time sal dwine awa',
Then a new dawn sal bring na' nicht ava.

Oh, glorious dawnin', yont oor mortal ken,
When we sal wake ta be immortal men,
An' dwell wi' Jesus, a' his glorie share,
Oor hame is robed in licht, nae nicht fa's there.

OLD LUMBEE RIVER

Its Colonial name was "Drowning Creek"; its
Indian name, "Lumbee River."

YES, thou art old, and generations past
The redman's home was in thy forests vast.
Along thy current shot his swift canoe,
He knew each cove and rapid, swamp and slough.

Along thy banks his wigwam found a place,
And in thy swamps did he the wild game chase.
Arts of the finny tribe, he wisely knew,
And many well-rewarded casts he threw.

Alone with nature dwelt these red men there,
Hunting their game, opossum, deer and bear.
While for some fancied cause, in vengeful wrath,
Their councils held, they strike the dread war-path.

Years pass, and now we see the Scotchman come,
To build along thy banks a thrifty home.
The red man sees with awe great clearings made
Upon the sand-hills sloping to the glade.

The hunting grounds now yield rich crops of maize,
And sheep and cattle in new pastures graze.
Before the woodsman's ax the redmen flee,
Seeking some spot where white men may not be.

Vain hope! for savage men must now give place
To men of brawn and brain, a sturdy race.
The poor Indian fades from mortal view,
No more to seek the haunts that once he knew.

In all these changes, Lumbee River flows
Her quiet way. And as each season goes,
More people settle on her thrifty sod,
Rear homes and altars for Almighty God.

Flow, gentle river, onward to the sea;
The good folk on thy banks are loving thee.
True men and sages on thy sand-hills dwell,
Nor would some highland home suit them as well.

A son of thine* oft sweetly sung of thee,
And now he sleeps by creeping vine and tree
He loved so well; and thou shalt hear no more
The magic cadence of his skilful oar.

No more will he of "Lumbee River" sing,
No more his soulful voice shall tell of spring
Along thy banks, or in thy bonnie braes,
Or charm us with his sweet "October" days.

But now, as thou art flowing to the sea,
Thy voice is gently whispering to me
Of him who sung those songs to nature true,
Songs so rich with heart-lore, and ever new.

Old River, ever dear to him, to me,
We loved thy lily-pads, and ev'ry tree
Along thy shady banks, nor would we sleep,
Where thou couldst not o'er us thy vigils keep.

FOLDED HANDS

A MEMORIAL OF MOTHER

DEAR folded hands, forever now at rest,
Ah! they shall toil no more.
How white they look, as resting on thy breast,
They speak of struggles o'er.

The touch of those dear hands was warm and true
As they a welcome gave.

*John Charles McNeill, the Poet.

In all the hours of grief she ever knew,
Her heart was leal and brave.

Those folded hands have staunch'd the flowing tear
For many weary eyes.
That faithful heart with sympathy sincere
Gave love and sacrifice.

Those folded hands, how oft they toil'd for me
While other hands would rest.
And now, no more their loving skill I see;
"The Father knoweth best."

Dear folded hands, the rest for them is sweet,
Until that bright, glad day
When I shall clasp them at the Master's feet,
All sorrow pass'd away.

In the new Heav'ns, before the great white throne,
Those hands a harp shall bear,
And joyful song without one sigh or moan
She shall with angels share.

THE BOYS OF LONG AGO

LIKE shadows from the misty past,
Faces I see.
And memory is holding fast
Those dear old boys for me.

There's red-hair'd Hal, with freckl'd face—
He was a wag,

And sure to find a welcome place
In "round cat," "knucks" or "tag."

When 'round the spring a thirsty crowd
Of noisy boys
Would gather, shouting long and loud,
Hal made no scrapping noise.

But, watching them, would quaintly say,
"When all are done,
Give me the gourd, don't drink all day—
For Hal himself wants one."

Then they would greet with merry shout
Old Hal, and say,
"He's mighty dry. Come, hold your spout,
And drink, and drink away."

There's lazy Sam. Oh! it was fun,
That summer day
A nest of hornets made him run
And race-horse speed display.

I see him now, with face aglow
And eyes astare,
Forgetting he was ever slow,
With his long tangled hair

To windward blowing, through his hat,
As on he sped,
As nimble as a frighten'd cat,
As full of real dread.

Long Jack said he "was fear'd of snakes
And squaropins."
A lizard would give him the shakes.
And, oh! such trembling shins.

So what does Tom, one summer day,
Do unto Jack,
But catch a snake, and in sly way
Slip into his old sack.

That old sack coat, down to his knees,
Had pockets deep,
And safely there, where no one sees,
Jack's many treasures sleep.

Beneath a handkerchief of red
His snakeship lay.
The recess o'er, Jack, without dread,
Comes rushing in from play.

The room was warm, and Jack was hot,
His face aglow.
Out came his handkerchief—but what
Has scared and shock'd him so?

"Oh, Lord!" he cries, "A snake! a snake!"
And out he ran,
And strives the old sack coat to shake
The very best he can.

"A snake! a snake!" and every boy
Pell-mell did go,

And would his utmost skill employ.

“We’re helping Jack,” you know.

Ah! those were boys! I love them yet,

Though some now sleep.

Those boys, I never can forget,

My heart doth safely keep

Fresh, clean and bright, their faces dear,

All through the years.

Until we meet with vision clear,

Beyond the frowns and tears.

BESIDE THE SEA

WHEN torrid heat is floating in the air,

From lowlands thick with rip’ning fields of grain,

When in the meadows cattle seek their fare,

By cooling brooks, amid the grass and cane.

When weary men come home at even-tide,

Spent with the heat, and grimy with their toil;

When katydids give forth their slumber-lied,

In tones that doth all restful sleep despoil.

Then would we seek beside the breezy sea

Some restful spot away from toil and care—

There let the waves, in graceful sporting glee,

Renew our strength, our wasted selves repair.

How sweet at eventide to walk the strand
And gather shells and seaweed by the way.
See flotsam drifting here from some far land,
The sport of curling waves and dashing spray.

Beside the sea, how cool the breezes blow,
The air is fragrant with its briny tang,
The rip'ling waves, with sky tints all aglow,
As "when the morning stars together sang."

Beside the sea, we watch some homeing sail
Or others launching for the farther side.
We waft a pray'r for every friendly gale,
That peace and safety may with them abide.

Beside the sea, we watch the sharpies sail
Out for the catch. Sea trout and bass, beware!
With graceful dip they trim to meet the gale,
The fishers come not thence without their share.

Beside the sea we for a while forget
The heat and burthen of some weary day.
Our hearts grow lighter—what if cares beset?
We shall be strong to meet them in the way.

Sweet are the days we spend beside the sea,
And gather brawn for duties yet before.
Then, homeward wend, where'er our home may be,
Bidding farewell to billow, sail and oar.

A PRAYER FOR PEACE

WRITTEN SOON AFTER THE BEGINNING OF HOSTILITIES IN EUROPE, SEPTEMBER 14TH, 1914

OH, thou the great I Am of all the ages,
Since Eden bloom'd and Adam walk'd with thee,
Thou who dost write on nature's rugged pages
Thy will, dictating that which is to be.

Thy world is steep'd in sin, greed and passion
striving;
Men in thine image made, bid passions kill.
Their heavy guns o'er bloody fields are driving,
While crying men are praying, "peace! be still!"

Slav, Anglo-Saxon, Teuton, French, in battle,
Nations once mingling in the marts of peace.
God, still the cannon's roar; death dealing rattle:
And bid this carnage now forever cease.

Oh, hear, Jehovah! hear! the widows weeping,
As they bemoan husband and father slain;
Orphans with streaming eyes to-day are reaping
The bitter fruit of war: hunger and pain.

Oh, thou who didst for man thy life surrender,
Didst pay our debt of shame on Calvary's brow:
In love look down, with pity, yet so tender!
Oh, "Prince of Peace!" we plead before Thee
now.

Oh, holy spirit! promised by the Master,
In this dark hour of war, we cry to Thee:
Stay thou this tide of woe! this fell disaster!
And grant the nations peace—beyond the sea.

WHY?

HOPE holds a goal, before our waiting eyes,
And bids us try.
Nor ever cease our struggle for the prize,
No prize: but much, and varied sacrifice.
We wonder why?

Ambition bids us seek for earthly good,
And bids us try
To gather more than just a livelihood.
Save gold and valued acres by the rood.
We wonder why?

Some maiden coy beckons our feet afar,
That we may try
To hitch our wagon to a wandering star,
Regardless whether it shall make or mar.
We wonder why?

Sometimes, the maiden meets the heart's desire,
Fills soul and eye.
Another comes, and all the fates conspire,
To blast our hopes, and thus awake our ire.
We wonder why?

We know not now, but in the days to come,
 "Sweet bye and bye,"
We shall, within the arches of our home,
Beyond life's day, repose, no more to roam.
 Nor question why?

OLD MILTON

AN OLD GEM OF A VILLAGE

It was a village of the olden time,
 A quaint old place.
Nothing about it told of the sublime:
 Nor could one trace,
 In that old place,
Aught that gave promise, she should in her prime,
 Fill larger space.

Old Milton! sweetest village of the vale,
 I loved thee well.
And thoughts of thee shall never pall; grow stale;
 But ever tell
 The story well:
That early, happy, care-free, childhood tale:
 Naught can excel.

Oh, golden days! that ne'er shall come again,
 Those days of glee,
When mother's kiss heal'd every ache and pain,
 And home to be
 Was joy to me.
It was my refuge, free from earthly stain,
 Sweet memory.

No stately mansions crown'd the Milton hills.
Content to dwell,
In humble homes, accepting joys or ills;
Each home could tell,
Of hearts that swell
With loyal love, that each sad murmur stills:
Could sing, "All's well."

Had Milton folk no poor? Ah, yes! Ah, yes!
The poor were there.
Along the years, came signals of distress,
And fever'd air,
Brought want and care.
Sore were the burthens many had to bear,
But, no despair.

For from those Milton homes came true of heart
The poor man's need,
Sweetly commanded, that from hence depart,
All son's of greed.
There was no need
For them: as loving hands and hearts took part,
All wants to heed.

And where are now the Milton boys and girls
Of other days?
Alas! we meet but few; the world still whirls,
And in a maze,
Our busy ways,
Are hiding manly hands, and sunny curls,
Known in those days.

Some manly hands are now forever still,
 Life's journey o'er.
Some sunny curls now rest on yonder hill—
 And they no more
 Walk paths of yore.
But they with joy, our gladsome hearts shall thrill,
 On yonder shore.

Dear Milton! thou art growing old and gray;
 So are thy boys.
And they are scatter'd over life's highway—
 Mid cares and joys,
 Mid life's annoys.
But we can never wander far away
 From thee: thy boys.

THE WEAVER'S SHUTTLE.

THE loom of the weaver is busy to-day,
 Yes—the warp is all wound,
The shed a highway,
Through which the shuttle doth busily play,
 Back and forth at a bound.

Thread by thread comes the woof that the shuttle
 brings,
And the pattern thus grows—
As our weaver sings—
The bounding shuttle so carefully flings
 Each thread—strange—how it knows!

That wonderful shuttle! how simple and true—
Yet the weaver's keen eye
Was the eye that knew
Threads the shuttle should bring, that each fadeless
hue
Might not be all awry.

Our lives, warp and woof, we are weaving each day
By a pattern divine.
No moment can stay.
Threads are passing thy way, oh! haste; make them
thine,
Weave thy pattern divine.

TO-MORROW.

AN eager child is waiting now,
A gift so long expected,
With smiling lips and anxious brow,
She claims fulfilling of thy vow.
Why should she be dejected?

Ah! she is young in human ways,
Has not learn'd to her sorrow
How many are the sad delays,
Attendant on the coming days,
When pledges mean to-morrow.

"To-morrow! what is that?" she cries,
 "There may be no to-morrow.
The time we have is just to-day,
So we must do just what we say,
 Nor moments try to borrow."

To-morrow, yesterday's to-day,
 Comes not to many mortals.
For, ere it dawns, they pass away
To sleep a while with kindred clay,
 Have pass'd for aye, life's portals.

To all who live well each to-day,
 As if there were no morrow,
Who strive the Master to obey,
And ever do just what they say,
 The future brings no sorrow.

For they in homes not made with hands,
 Bright, glorious, and supernal,
Shall dwell with saints from many lands,
Who spend with Heav'n's own angel bands,
 To-morrow's life, eternal.

SOMETIME

SOMETIME, ah, when? 'twas in life's long ago,
A lad was chasing shadows in the field,
Was picking daisies in the evening glow,
Or riding home upon the fragrant mow.
 'Twas long ago.

Sometime, beside the ingle long ago,
A group of happy children, full of glee,
Gather'd at eventide, while lightwood glow
Made odd fantastic figures come and go.

'Twas long ago.

Into a world of change those children went
To mingle in the toil that comes to all.
Along the way, with trials sore forespent,
Some pass'd away: others with age grew bent.

'Twas long ago.

And yet, sometime, they all shall meet again,
Find perpetual youth, beyond life's day,
Shall leave behind a life of toil and pain—
Sometime, ah, yes! beyond life's stormy main—

Leave long ago.

Sometime, 'tis sweet to think it won't be long,
We'll tie again the tangled threads of life,
Will join together in the homing song,
Have joy for trial, we'll forget the wrong—

Of long ago.

And there at home, beside the crystal sea,
With those we loved in whilom days on earth,
To Him, our King of kings, will bow the knee,
For then our clearer eyes the why shall see,

Of long ago.

AYONT THE MIRK

WHAT lies ayont the mirk?
Ayont where stars are gleaming:
What's far ayont warld's wark,
And it's disjasket seeming?

When yirth wi' a' its joys
Na mair sal gie us pleasure,
Ayont these childish ploys:
Sal we ayont find treasure?

Aye, far ayont the lift—
We win the yetts o' glorie,
And there receive oor gift:
Weel kent i gospel story.

The light o' heeven's day
For us sal shine eternal—
The mirk ha' dwined for aye—
The lamb's licht is supernal.

Beside the jasper sea,
We'll sing redemption's story.
Oor feet ne'er gang agley
Upon the hills o' glorie.

THE WANDERER

IT was the twilight of a winter day,
She sat beside her ingle snug and warm,
While darkness stole upon her, cold and gray,
The moaning wind presaging coming storm.

The years had set their seal upon her brow,
And silver gray were locks once golden brown.
Living more in the past, than present now,
Her thoughts were tender; rarely did she frown.

Her soft gray eyes, with mem'ries' light aglow,
Seemed melting into tears of love and hope:
They gaze into the years; the long ago,
Into the future now, she fain would grope.

"What of her lost, her wayward, wandering one?"
He, once the loving son, her hope and joy,
Was he an outcast, homeless and alone?
"Ashamed to meet thy mother's love? Oh, boy!"

'Twas thus her heart with tenderness did burn,
As she sat watching: vigil kept for years.
When would the truant wanderer return?
Her aching heart now questioned through her
tears.

Out through the nearing night, she yet could see
A marble shaft that mark'd the holy place,
Where slept her dear ones, 'neath the apple tree—
Husband and daughter: trophies now of Grace.

Only one child link'd her to childhood ways,
Kept her in touch with motherhood and joy.
Her mother's image shone from darling Grace,
A child of seven bright years, loving, and coy.

Beside her grandma stood the winsome Grace,
Watching to see the first white flakes of snow.
She did not see upon her grandma's face
The shining tears lit by the fire-light glow.

But she had caught a glimpse of swirling snow,
"See grandma! see! 'twill be a snowy night,
And when to-morrow's morning comes, you know,
Old Mother Nature will be dress'd in white."

"'Tis so, my child, a dark and stormy night,
It makes me think of those upon the sea,
And we must pray that God will by His might
Keep homeless ones to-night on sea or lea."

"Hark, grandma! there's a knock upon the door,
And heavy steps are tramping now the snow.
Who can to-night be out upon the moor?
I will the door unbar and let you know."

With agile step, Grace hasten'd to the door,
Open'd it wide: a stranger enter'd in,
Weak and forlorn, he fell upon the floor.
A victim now to illness, want and sin.

It was a mother's love that heard the fall,
It was a mother's heart that thrill'd with joy.
Quickly she came responsive to the call
Of Grace: it was to greet her truant boy.

"Go, Grace," she spake, "and call our serving man.
Thine uncle needeth loving, tender care.

He needeth all things: we both will, and can,
With him, our comfort, and abundance share."

"Repentant soul! have I at last a home?
Mother! I merit but thy latest curse.
To leave thee thus—o'er fields of sin to roam,
What wretch in prison walls hath acted worse?"

"Oh, prodigal! my child! thou art my boy.
It was for thee; and such as thee, He died.
Thou hast this night o'er fill'd my heart with joy,
Hast mother, home, and Christ the crucified."

Down came the snow upon a happy home,
A worn and weary soul was now at peace.
No more his feet forbidden paths should roam;
For he had gain'd from sin a glad release.

THE OLD SPINNING WHEEL

FRESH from the distant hills
The autumn winds are blowing.
They bear upon their breath
The red and russet leaves.
I hear the babbling rills
As through the gorges flowing,
They sing of life (not death);
Among the purple hills.

In pastures at my feet,
Our sheep still find their grazing.
Their fleeces not so warm,
As they would have them be.
Nor do they autumn greet
So cheerfully; but gazing—
in fear—an autumn storm,
Their eyes would seem to see.

The fleeces that they wore
In the days of leafy June,
The shearers gather'd then,
For our winter's spinning.
The rolls, a fluffy store,
Reach'd the weavers none too soon;
Our eager greed for more,
'Gainst the sheep, seem'd sinning.

Hark! while the sheepbells ring,
And a mocking calls his mate,
And bees belated bring
Home sweet stores of honey.
And bluebirds gay of wing
Are chirping, "old winter's late"—
A sound comes echoing—
O'er the hills—so bonny.

'Tis mother's spinning wheel,
And its song is bold and free.
I hear its zoo oo notes—
They fill my heart with glee.
In thought bright moments steal,
Through memory, back to me.
The starting tears I feel,
Glad tears of memory.

That dear old spinning wheel,
How it tells of long ago,
Of years so full of joy,
Of childhood's happy glow.
Our days of weel or woe,
Are order'd well, we know,
Yet our thoughts in clusters grow
'Round that old spinning wheel.

KEPT

'TIS sweet to know I am the father's child,
What e'er betide.
E'en though around me swirl an ocean wild,
His hand doth guide.

Kept, safely kept, why should my heart know fear?
He watcheth me.
He only would his tim'rous child draw near,
His grace to see.

We stand amid the storm on mountain side,
The lightnings glare,
The thunders roar, o'er valleys far and wide,
Faith would despair:

But to our fearsome hearts is whisper'd, "Kept,"
Nor need we dread,
For though our world be torn and tempest swept,
Hope is not dead.

Kept by the pow'r of God along life's way,
Faith triumphs still.
Strength to each soul, according to our day,
To do his will.

And when at last, with joy, we see the king,
Life's journey o'er.
We shall to him our earth-worn chaplets bring,
Praise ever-more.

RHYMES ABOUT BOYS

THE FRECKLE-FACED BOY

THERE is something about him,
I cannot tell what,
That makes him so different from others.
You would pick him from dozens,
As best of the lot:
Though homeliest one of his brothers.

What a droll looking fellow,
All ready for fun,
With freckles as big as a penny.
Those freckles, 'twould bother you
Just where they begun:
Nor would you have him without any.

And the neighbors all call'd him,
Just "Turkey Egg Tom."
But that made no difference whatever,
For at fight or at foot-race,
Or singing a psalm,
That freckle-faced boy was quite clever.

Oh! that big-hearted fellow
In foot-ball was great;
His punting outpunted all others.
So whatever he tackled
Was all up-to-date:
A long way ahead of his brothers.

Do you ask what's become of
Our "Turkey Egg Tom?"
Amid all the changes around us.
Oh! he is making things hum,
A man has become:
Atop of the heap, 'way beyond us.
You do well to be watching
The freckle-faced boy,
When seeking the man of the future.
As boy his wits he'll employ,
At times to annoy,
In future—he may be a Blücher.

THE STUMP-TOED BOY'S COMPLAINT

"YES, sir! that's the matter,
And I'm just mad of it.
That big toe can scatter—
Hit more things on this grit
Than all the rest of me.
Rocks ain't no use at all
Just where they shouldn't be:
To make me stump, and fall.
"I like the summer time,
When I can shuck my shoes.
But it's not so very prime,
This havin' a stone-bruise.
Stumpin' a fellow's toe
Makes good boys awful mad.
I know, with me, 'tis so.
And, how about you, Dad?

"Boys is boys, they say,
No matter where they be.
Stump toes gits away,
With tempers 'cross the sea.
Of sugar, rags, and soot—
I keep a stock, you see,
When big toe hits a root,
I'm mad, as mad can be."

"CUTTING JACKETS"

OUR master had a whim, we might say rule,
When he would discipline enforce in school.
Selecting two game boys, near equal size,
Caught in some trick by his all-seeing eyes.

The switches were of hick'ry, tough and keen,
Before the school were "cutting jackets" seen.
And should each boy a grudge to other bear,
The licks were giv'n without one thought to spare.

Grim grit was seen, when blows came thick and
fast,

What looks of wrath each on the other cast.
The "cutting jackets" often raised a scrap,
And roused the choler in each gamey chap.

The master was the umpire of this game,
And saw that the performance was not tame.
And when the swish of rod was sharp and keen,
Upon his face a cannie smile was seen.

"Hi, Jack! give Tom another lick or two,
And, Tom! give Jack all that he gives to you.

Ye naughty boys must punish your ill deeds,
And give each other all your conduct needs."

"Jack! that old teacher is a blasted fool!"
Said Tom, when they were going home from school.
"Tom! we are fools," said Jack; "when we get mad,
We spite ourselves and make the teacher glad."

WAITING FOR A BOY

THE feast is spread, the sacrifice all ready,
Jesse hath gather'd all his sons but one.
And as they pass, with eye and footstep steady,
The stern old judge sees not "the chosen one."

"Are all thy children here?" a leading question;
"There's yet a lad, and he doth mind the sheep."
How quick the judge now seizes the suggestion,
"Send, fetch him, not till then the feast we
keep."

The judge, the father, neighbors, all are waiting
The coming of that sturdy shepherd boy.
"Why wait for him?" questions the heart of hating,
"Why is he honor'd, at this feast of joy?"

How lithe in form, how modest, yet how fearless,
Doth David come before his judge and priest.
Among his brothers, there he stands, the peerless:
The honor'd guest where he had seem'd the least.

Jehovah chooses men that fit his measure,
Nor looks he for a giant in man's size.
How often gems are worth a priceless treasure,
That seem but pebbles to our unskilled eyes.

HOT GINGER CAKES

WHEN a fellow's real hollow,
Where his breeches fits him least,
Feels hungry as a mink that's had no dinner,
And when his eager swallow
Could accommodate a feast,
He would welcome anything—from whale to
minnow.

Turn him loose at dinner-time,
Quick from school he makes a run,
Nor is he long in nearing smell of kitchen.
For hot ginger-cakes are there—
Why, he scents them in the air,
He scoots, and his old breeches keeps a-hitchin'.

Aunt Polly's at the oven,
Just a pilin' in the dough,
While smoking hot are cakes upon the dresser—
"Hungry, chile?" she says to me.
"Just as hungry's I can be."
And she gave him all he wanted, Heav'n bless her.

"Tell me, is there anything
Known to cooks, and folks like that,
So good to boys, as ginger cakes a-cookin'?
For, if there should chance to be,
It is still unknown to me.
For good things hungry boys are always lookin'."

THE OLD WATER MILL

A LANDMARK of the neighborhood
Was the old water mill,
As it nestled in the willows,
Beneath a steep red hill.
The foam of the rushing water
Quite charm'd my childish eyes,
As I watch'd the huge old mill wheel,
With wonder and surprise.

The boys all loved the miller man,
With hair as white as meal,
With beard to match, and ruddy cheeks,
And eyes as blue as steel.
He always had a welcome smile,
A cheery word or two,
But—all must take their "miller's turn,"
"No favor'd grist for you."

'Twas good to hear his hearty laugh
When millboys "just for fun,"
Danced to the mill-wheel's merry click.
When grinding had begun,
And he found time to bait our hooks,
To make our whistles, too,
And—how to catch the wary Jack—
He'd gladly tell to you.

What jolly times the mill-boys had
At that old water mill.
That scrap down at "the washin' hole,"
When Tom, he soused in Bill.

But miller man, he stop'd that scrap.
 "Come, boys! ye're here for fun:
And if ye go to fightin', sure—
 I'll thrash ye, ev'ry one."

It didn't take a minute—we
 Were all as still as mice.
We lov'd and fear'd "the miller man,"
 His grip was like a vise.
And then he'd laugh so hearty too,
 It put us in a grin,
And we would all agree with him,
 That "fightin' was a sin."

Some mill boys at that water mill
 Are now old grizzled men.
While some have brought their last turn home.
 We see them not again.
For they, beside the miller sleep:
 The churchyard near the mill
For them is earth's last resting place—
 So quaint, so green, so still.

And—what of the old water mill?
 It too has pass'd away.
A moss-grown roof, a broken wheel,
 All crumbling to decay,
Is all we see of that dear mill—
 That ground the grist for me.
"Passing away," is written still
 On all of earth I see.

HE'S JUST A BOY

WITH jacket torn and pants all worn,
With brimless hat and base-ball bat,
With whoop and yell, "a jolly fell."
He's just a boy.

He's up for fun with rod or gun,
If lean, or fat, what matters that,
All day he goes, to evening's close.
He's just a boy.

He has no care for rent or tear,
His clothes just rare, rude patches are.
He'll catch the hare, and eat his share.
He's just a boy.

He wades the brook with line and hook,
Woe to the trout! they must look out
Or he'll ensnare, and get his share.
He's just a boy.

Time moves too slow, he's on the go,
From early dawn to sunset glow.
Ties a tin pan to Towser's tail.
He's just a boy.

Greases the cat with bacon fat,
Spatters the floor with inkspots o'er.
He puts a mouse in mother's souce.
He's just a boy.

If we just knew what he would do,
Ah! then would we find remedy.
But we don't know, we move so slow,
And, he's a boy.

This tatter'd chap brings some mishap
Where'er he goes, and no one knows
What rare exploit, swift and adroit,
Will move that boy.

And still that boy is some one's joy,
Some mother's heart will take his part;
In loving way will gently say:
"He's just a boy."

THAT HOMELY BOY

HE has a shock of deep red hair,
That homely boy.
It flashes in the sunlight's glare,
A tangled mass, a brush-heap, where
The wild winds play, nor does he care,
That homely boy.

His mouth is large, and hath a smile,
That homely boy.
His eyes are dancing now with fun,
We know he hath some mischief done,
Those eyes no accusation shun,
That homely boy.

The teacher has an easy chair.
That homely boy
Watches that teacher resting there,
Then slyly places a needle where
It brings sensations, keen and rare,
That naughty boy.

Red-headed, rough and uncouth he,
And yet that boy,
Though full of fun and jollity,
And ready for some mischief, he
Is brave and truthful as can be,
A manly boy.

Some day that boy will be a man.
That homely boy
Will brush his hair as others do,
Will wear a shiney dudish shoe,
In talent, outshine me or you.
That homely boy.

A GROUP OF SONNETS.

SATISFIED

A SAD unrest would make my heart complain
When disappointments meet me in the way:
When rosy hopes, as bright as summer's day,
Are chill'd and blighted, as by autumn rain;
And hopes weep over expectations slain.
But to my heart, there comes a promise sweet,
Hope shall some day its full fruition meet;
Rest, weary heart, upon this promise sure,
Remember, 'tis a loving hand doth guide.
That which is best, he gives; not what we crave.
Content thyself with every passing hour,
Nor be to fretful care a weary slave:
The leaf and bud must come, before the flow'r,
And at the last thou shalt be satisfied.

CAN I FORGET?

CAN I forget the days that are no more,
The boyhood friends lov'd in the long ago?
The happy hours, when life with joy aglow
Gave promise of a future, rich in store,
For youthful hands to grasp, just at the door
Awaiting me? Ah! no, we ne'er forget.
'Tis when my brow, with frost of age is wet,
There comes to me sweet thoughts of other days:
And I live o'er again days that abide
In mem'ry: call to life friends now asleep,
And people homes I loved in other days,
And with them once again, I joy and weep.
Then life once more becomes a joyous maze.
Sweet then the joy of youth at eventide.

MY MURAL CROWN

A CROWN of gold, indented and inscribed,
By Master Artist, was the gift of Rome.
To soldier brave, in peace returning home,
Who first in deadly breach had danger bribed
With dauntless courage; who no fear imbibed
From deadly strife: but ever quick to see
The point of danger there would dare to be.
Our world's a battlefield, the fight is on,
The hosts of evil are in dread array.
No craven soldier need expect the crown;
The master of the field, with cohorts true,
Shall smite Abaddon's hosts, and bid them down
To the abyss: Redeemed Gentile and Jew—
Shall wear a mural crown in that glad day.

THE NEW MOON

A SILVER crescent in a starlit sky,
Thou art the queen of all thy sister spheres.
Saturn wears rings, and Jupiter appears
With four bright moons, his censor's night and day;
No wonder he doth shine with peerless ray.
The glow of Mars hath glint like ruby tears,
Venus hath shined through the eternal years;
But to our earth, fair moon, thou art so bright,
We crown thee queen over the rolling spheres.
For thou art miss'd when darkness veils thy face,
And only stars our nightly light may be:
How gladly man hails thy returning grace,
Thy silver crescent is a joy to me,
And will be to our race throughout the years.

THE HARPS O' GOD

THE harps o' God are ringing sweet and clear,
Touch'd by redemption's inspiring breath.
The shining ones have now no fear of death,
No tremor smites the hand, there is no tear
In the glad eyes of harpers gather'd here.
Sweet harps o' God, how Heav'n's arches ring,
As the Redeem'd their gladsome anthems sing;
They joy in meeting by the crystal sea,
Those ransom'd ones, the Master hath made free.
Here gather all who through the weary years
Of earthly pilgrimage did bear the cross:
And now—regardless of "the vale of tears,"
They find earth's purest gold in Heav'n but dross,
Have won immortal life, eternity.

THAT ABSENT FACE

WE sit and muse of all the loved and lost,
Who brighten'd happy days of long ago.
How bonnie e'en to think of sunset glow,
That came regardless of earth's chill or frost—
Youth takes the joy—but rarely counts the cost.
'Tis only when some sorrow leaves its trace,
And we are call'd to mourn an absent face,
We feel the shadows creeping over life,
Presaging that there comes an end, to-day.
Dear absent face! how mem'ry treasures thee,
And to my waiting heart, and longing eye,
The tender smile so sweetly comes to me:
Gives token of communings bye and bye,
When joy shall bid all sorrow's tears away.

AN EMPTY SHELL

AN empty shell toss'd up with careless grace,
Sport of an ever heaving, restless sea.
Thy master once did boldly sail with thee
In sunny climes; but now, there's not a trace
Within this shell, showing the master's place
Aboard the vessel: thou wert lost at sea.
This shell, an empty craft, hath come to me
Through calm and storm; o'er restless ocean waste:
Thou hast a story, and would'st tell it me.
I place thee close beside my list'ning ear—
And thou dost whisper softly, sweetly clear,
And all thy song is of the deep blue sea.
Thy lips are pink, as is the blush of love
From plighted hearts, who would their faith
approve.

OMNIPOTENCE

I HEAR it in the blast that comes with pow'r,
Rending with mighty stroke the forest trees:
Or, in the murmur of the summer breeze,
Kissing with dainty touch the rarest flow'r:
Omnipotence doth rule in shine or show'r.
The thunders sleep, when nature takes her ease:
Where is thy strength, oh! monarch of the seas?
Omnipotence, thy hand at any hour
Canst wake the thunders, or the seas at will:
'Tis thine to ban or bless our mortal state,
For thou alone dost curb and master fate.
Come! and command that adverse storms be still,
Faith in omnipotence shall quench all fear,
And bring at last the peace of heaven near.

GLOAMING TIME

BEHIND the woods, toward the underworld,
The sun hath his departure swiftly made,
Leaving in shadow, forest, stream and glade.
The busy day its banner now hath furl'd,
And homing nature whispers, "quiet world."
'Tis gloaming time and visions come to me
Of friends afar my heart doth long to see;
Some dear sweet face, illumin'd with a smile,
Is bidding all earth's gloomy clouds away;
And as the sunset glow still paints the west,
I sit and dream, await the coming night
With all its hallow'd hours of peace and rest.
Oh! gloaming time, thou art a pure delight,
A solace for each dark and gloomy day.



REV. HALBERT G. HILL, D.D.

PART II

POEMS FROM THE MANSE

BY REV. HALBERT G. HILL, D. D.

Pastor Maxton and Centre Churches
Maxton, N. C.

THE LAST PLAGUE OF EGYPT

'Tis night; a pall of darkness shrouds the Nile,
Portentous shadow of Jehovah's wrath,
Which lowers as some frowning thunder pile,
Whence leaps the lightning in its downward
path.

Why like some crater gloomed is Pharaoh's brow,
By fears' volcanic fires within his breast
Which cause his frame to shake, his head to bow
With a chaotic surge that knows no rest?

Why round each hearthstone groups the house-
hold band,
With blanched cheeks to watch the loved first
born,
Doomed to the touch of dissolution's hand,
Ere night has fled before the glance of morn?

Why clad with terror neighs the trembling steed?
Why low the sheltered cattle with affright?
What nameless noises brood o'er marsh and mead?
Why howls the watch dog in the ear of night?

Well may a land, unawed by Aaron's rod,
Which budding plagues has ninefold ruin
wrought,
Cower with dread when an avenging God,
Destruction new has to its border brought.

Scarce has the night attained the noon of fear,
When wailings lashed the waves of Egypt's air,
And such a tide of woe broke on the ear,
As chafes the rugged caverns of despair.

For stricken Egypt mourns her early pride,
Which blighted lies beneath the shafts divine,
As harvests young beneath the lava tide,
As felled by lightning stroke the lofty pine.

Canst thou the lightning chain, the ocean bind,
The mighty earthquake check that rends the sod;
Canst thou restrain the tempest-driving wind?
No more can I contend with such a God.

Thus Pharaoh thought when with affliction clad,
Thus might he muse beside his first born's tomb,
Yet by a lust of power rendered mad,
He hurried onward to his night of doom.

MORAL BEAUTY

FOR TWO YOUNG GIRLS

THE flush of youth adorns your brow,
Your cheeks are like the rosy dawn,
Your maiden blossoms showing now,
May a ripe womanhood adorn.

But outward beauty soon must fade,
And charms of person don't abide.
The fleeting years will rob the maid
Of all the charms that decked the bride.

But moral beauty shall survive
The wreck that comes to mortal frame,
When gracious souls remain alive
To graces giving deathless fame.

Then seek these graces may each maid,
May God's own spirit them bestow,
That, in your matchless charms arrayed,
Your souls may endless beauty know.

RUTH'S CHOICE

FOR SOME YOUNG LADIES

WHEN lassies are bonny and yet not too good
To give to male mortals their own daily food,
They are always attractive to practical man,
Who needs women who will as well as who can.

Among their fair maidens the Scripture of truth
Describes as attractive the fair faithful Ruth,
Whose personal beauty and practical sense
Won for her from Boaz affection intense.

Her wise noble choice bore most precious fruit,
And opened the way for a marvelous suit
That gave her a home in the land of the vine,
And linked her sweet name with the Savior Divine.

The fruits of her choice did not end upon earth,
But were linked with rich blessings of heavenly
birth.

Her choice gave home in the fair land above,
Where all is perfection, the Ruler is love.

It set free her spirit from care and from strife,
It wrote her dear name in the Lamb's book of life,
Her nature redeemed it placed in the throng
Of immortals now chanting Immanuel's song.

THE CLYDE

FOR MISS CLYDE

IN bonny Scotland flows the Clyde,
A noble stream, fair Glasgow's pride,
Where art and nature have unfurled
The flags that fly around the world.

His moving waters seek the sea,
His lofty crags, God bid them be.
But human labors made the bed,
O'er which his flowing waters spread.

Our own fair Clyde is like this stream,
On which God's sunshine sheds its gleam.
Her noblest gifts God does impart
But human culture helps the heart.

This stream well fed by heaven's springs
To a vast city blessings brings.
So may your life enriched by grace,
On many hearts rare beauty trace.

Fair maid, life's current seeks the sea,
Time billows merge in eternity.
May all earth's trials your soul refine,
And perfect crown with sheen divine.

SUNBEAMS

No agents more potent are seen on earth's sod
Than light's lovely children, the sunbeams of God.
They come on their mission of comfort and love
From the radiant sun, from our Father above.

They banish the shadows and usher the dawn,
They gleam on the mountain and brighten the lawn,
They waken the choirs of forest and field,
And bid feathered songsters their melody yield.

They marshal the seasons and temper the air,
They bid youthful springtime her blossoms to bear,
They ripen the harvests of summer's glad prime,
And mellow the fruits of sweet autumn time.

They shine on the ocean and order the tides,
They render the dew drops gems fitted for brides,
They unlock the chains winter forges for streams,
With the sweet potent kiss of their radiant beams.

They visit the tombs of the long buried seed
With footsteps so silent that none give them heed,
They are victors when death is encountered in strife,
And lift quickened seed to a newness of life.

EARTH'S MISTS

EARTH's mists are seen amid the lowly valleys,
And cling around the lofty mountain's brow,
And lowly hearts are touched by sorrow's sallies,
And lofty ones to her stern scepter bow.

How chill the air with gloomy mists prevailing,
How dark the landscape, mantled with their pall,
How cold the heart by sorrow moved to wailing,
How drear earth's prospects when sore griefs en-
thrall!

But gloomy mists enwrap the restless ocean,
Where many journey undisturbed by fear,
While oft amid the tossing waves' commotion
The horn suggests that danger may be near.

Thus on life's sea, with shrouding mists of sorrow,
Where many seem disturbed by no alarm,
A signal cry suggests perhaps to-morrow
May bring sad wreck, or visit grievous harm.

But mists on land or sea are fraught with glory,
When lifted by the sun to upper skies.
The threatening cloud piles, whether dark or hoary,
Are clothed by light with beauty to our eyes.

Thus sorrow's mists our checkered lives enfolding,
When touched by Christ, the sun with grace
Divine,
No longer seem a pall our spirits holding,
But like a robe with heavenly beauties shine.

MAIDENHOOD.

THE little child,
With spirits wild,
And tendency to frolic,
Is like the breeze
That with great ease,
Stirs autumn leaves to rollic.

The growing maid,
With mind more staid,
Like stream 'twixt brook and river,
Oft finds more rest
In life's stern quest,
Though it flows on for ever.

The ripened woman,
With powers golden,
When river reaches flood,
May have rich gifts
That give uplifts,
That bear men on to God.

The winsome bride,
At lover's side,
As oak sustains the vine,
May clothe with bloom,
And banish gloom,
And household joys refine.

THE TRANSLATED

DEAR friends, you are lonely this auspicious day,
With husband and father from earth called away;
Yet you may rejoice he has reached the glad goal,
Where "the smile of the Lord is the feast of the
soul."

We mourn his departure and miss him on earth,
His presence and cheer beside the home hearth,
But from cares, sin and toils of earth he is free,
And eats of the fruit of the life-giving tree.

Paul, caught from the earth to the mansions above,
Where holiness dwells and the Ruler is love,
Saw visions of beauty no mortal can know,
Heard words none can utter in regions below.

Elijah, departing, the prophets deplore,
As fiery couriers him heavenward bore.
But none would recall him to earth's scenes again,
When once he has listened to heaven's glad strain.

Believers to mansions of glory ascend,
Upon the Lord's promise they safely depend.
They join the ransomed, unite with the throng
That peal the glad anthem of glorious song.

The saints are translated and none of them dead,
Though sometimes we view their earth's lowly bed,
For Jesus Immanuel has promised to give
His trusting disciples a grand life to live.

GRACES AT THE BRIDAL

FAITH comes to the bridal, both human, divine,
Her radiant light most resplendent shall shine,
To banish the doubt that might gloom wedded
 hearts,
And give the content that trust only imparts.

Attending the bridal, faith frequents the home,
Or joy to the inmates will never there come;
Whenever from household faith sadly departs,
Distrust fills the void and must chill all hearts.

Hope, too, seeks the bridal to bring gladsome cheer,
To whisper soft words to human hearts dear,
To cast o'er the future her beautiful bow,
And impart the gladness that hopeful hearts know.

She spans threatening clouds with radiant bow,
The seal of God's promise to mortals below.
She decks the horizon with visions so bright,
As to banish sad fears that are allied to night.

Among bridal graces majestic in mien,
Appears Christian love, a radiant queen;
With sceptre most potent she sways human hearts,
And manifold blessings to mankind imparts.

She is lovely as dawn with her rich rosy glow,
And has varied beauty like heaven's grand bow.
She ministers comfort and gives men delight,
When ruled by her sceptre and blest with her might.

THE CLOUD WITH SILVER LINING

FOR A BEREAVED MOTHER

THE darkest cloud may have a silver lining,
If mortal eyes can pierce the saddening gloom;
Upon the upper skies God's sun is shining
To cheer the sadness even of the tomb.

From darkest cloud upon our sky appearing,
May issue radiant God's resplendent bow.
His faithful promises our sad hearts cheering,
Afford sweet comfort which the trusting know.

From darkest cloud descends the rain refreshing,
Which bids the buried seed revive and grow.
It brings the winnowing breeze at time of threshing,
To make the wheat abide, the chaff to go.

Jehovah takes the child, the parents guarding,
And gently folds it in His arms of love.
Its highest welfare and its bliss regarding,
He bears it to the radiant home above.

CHRISTMAS WISHES

FOR A FRIEND

MY friend, I do not often woo the muses,
Nor seek to wake the silent harp again,
Unless some grief or joy my mind enthuses
To seek expression in poetic strain.

Your friendship, sweet as summer's fragrant roses,
Anew has blossomed at this Christmas tide.
May Peace that in the trustful heart reposes,
Dwell in your home, within your heart abide.

May Hope, whose peerless bow of radiant beauty
Oft spans the heavens with most varied hue,
Nerve you for trial and for steadfast duty,
And keep you waiting for the promise true.

May Love, the chiefest of the royal graces,
Not merely human but much more divine,
Leave on your spirit its delightful traces
And render it Jehovah's holy shrine.

COMFORT AND SORROW

To those who believe in God and His grace
Come multiplied comforts in sorrow.
The truths that in Scripture we readily trace
Furnish sources from which we can borrow.

Sweet memories come to the heart that is sad,
To help it in bearing its losses,
And Divine-given hopes may well make us glad
And sustain us in bearing life's crosses.

May your faith never fail, though the darkness
prevail,
In the radiant Gospel story.
But trust and adore Him whom you implore
To reveal you a father in glory.

GREETING TO AN INVALID FRIEND

At Christmas tide, I would not fail to send
A greeting to one long esteemed a friend.
In summer time I missed your presence sweet
Amid the varied charms of fair Montreat.

I trust that now the winter's bracing air
Has bloom restored and obvious repair;
That growing strength of body has been given,
And graces to the soul that fit for Heaven.

A NEW YEAR'S GREETING TO THE ABSENT

SURROUNDED by kindred where life had its dawn,
A greeting from me this auspicious morn
Can scarcely expect very much to enhance
The pleasure that comes to the "Mistress of
Manse."

But the taper, tho' feeble, is kin to the sun,
And light wins a way, where a way can be won;
And cordial good-will, whatever its source,
Appeals to the heart with some moral force.

Accept then the greeting this missive would bear,
From pastor and household, which all in it share.
We wish you all joy in the glad years to come,
And when you return will welcome you home.

LIGHTS AND SHADOWS

THE beauteous landscape oft is made
By alternating light and shade.
And human life, tho' touched with sadness,
Affords us all some source of gladness.

The night oft comes to homes on earth
Illumed by stars of heavenly birth,
And Christmas comes a radiant gem
To shine in Star of Bethlehem.

You have been blest, my winsome maid,
With many womanly charms arrayed;
Refinement, home, and cultured friend
And grace divine your steps attend.

May lights abound on your pathway,
And shadows never come to stay;
May all the days of coming year
Bring gladness that the heart will cheer.

GOD'S GIFT ON THE CROSS

THE cross, once a symbol of crime and of shame,
Is wedded to honor with Jesus' glad name.
It lifted the Savior to Kingship and fame,
And for His disciples it still does the same.

Each Christmas reminds us of God's precious gift.
Heaven's sun shines upon us when clouds show a
rift.

God's love gave us Jesus, the Savior Divine,
To dispel our darkness by bidding light shine.

He humbled Himself to the cross and the grave,
The souls of the guilty yet trusting to save.
The weary find rest in the shade of the cross,
And none sheltered there shall experience loss.

SKY DWELLERS

OUR choicest gifts come down from above,
Are freighted with goodness and fragrant with love.
The greeting that came from "Alta Vista" to-day
Was freighted with beauty and friendship's glad
ray.

Surrounding the mountain, and girding its base,
The storm-clouds oft gather and find a fit place,
But far above darkness the mountain peak's head
Is crowned with a light that the sun's rays can shed.

The dwellers on mountains are lonely on earth,
As Elijah in Israel when altar and hearth
Were robbed of the fire which, kindled of God,
Made holy the land that Jehovah had trod.

But the prophet discovered that graces still live
In thousands who to Baal no homage will give.
His grand work completed, he is borne to his goal,
Where "The smile of the Lord is the feast of the
soul."

The dwellers on mountains can breathe heaven's
air,
Or like the Messiah can seek them for prayer;
Can gaze from their summits on scenes of delight,
As Moses saw visions from Pisgah's grand height.

Dear friends, on Mount Zion may you ever dwell,
Where the dews that descend, all on Hermon excel,
And when you have climbed to the highest place
given
To mortals on earth, may you then soar to Heaven.

WOMAN'S INFLUENCE

THE perfume oft lingers when violets go;
In nature, with women, alike it is so.
Some women a social aroma diffuse,
A kindness to comfort, a wit to amuse.

And some, like the sunlight, rare beauty impart
To objects most humble, to lowliest heart.
Then others, like dews of the morning, descend
Upon which the lofty and lowly depend,
To bless with their presence the weary and worn,
And by their sweet contact refresh and adorn.

And now, my fair maiden, you only can choose
To be perfume or sunshine, or like morning dews.
If triune perfection the fair sex may gain,
It may be your fortune all three to attain.

THE CULTURED WOMAN

A CULTURED woman is a polished gem,
Fitted to adorn a diadem.
She diffuses a fragrance like that of flowers,
And brings refreshment like summer showers.

She has spiritual beauty, which gives delight,
That we must desire to retain in sight.
As the diamond with facets most varied and bright,
She reflects the heaven's most radiant light.

As the rainbow, with its graceful form,
Appears in clouds and surmounts the storm,
So amid earth's sorrows she reveals
God's promised mercy which the cloud conceals.

The cultured woman is a magnet strong,
Which wins and holds the human throng.
In social life she wields such power
As the sun exerts at the noontide hour.

THE CLOUD

THE cloud is a symbol suggestive of joy;
In Israel's history it had grand employ:
A sign of God's presence and wonderful might,
Giving darkness to Egypt and Israel light.

It crowns Sinai's summit with tempest and awe
When in tones of thunder God utters His law,
When Israel trembled and Moses' heart quails,
And conscious of guilt, the sinner yet wails.

It led thro' the desert and pointed the way
To the home where the weary could finally stay.
In the pathway of duty it gave grateful shade
To those who, tho' fainting, God's precepts obeyed.

In Solomon's temple, resplendent with gold,
With jewels most precious and treasures untold,
The fane was not sacred with glory divine
Till the cloud of Jehovah illumined the shrine.

THE LAST DAYS OF JESUS

THE last days of Jesus spent on this dark earth
Were full of rare wonders, though humble His
birth.

There were glimpses of glory, and shadows of
night,

When, often appearing, He vanished from sight.

His counsels were cheering, His promises bright,
His love was most tender, and matchless His might.
To Olivet He journeyed, and soared to the throne,
For those to be sovereign whose sins He had borne.

But Jesus, departed, again shall return;
This world with its contents is destined to burn.
Yet a new earth and heaven shall dawn on our
view,

More radiant and lovely than Paradise knew.

Then Jesus, resplendent, from heaven shall come,
His Bride an attendant to make earth their home.
Here, for ages ceaseless, together they dwell,
Their glory the tongue of no mortal can tell.

THE MUSE UNCHAINED

My bonny friend, I seldom woo the muses
And touch the harp that poets oft employ,
Unless some theme my quickened mind enthuses
To seek expression for unwonted joy.

The winter's frosts bind stream and brooklets'
waters
With icy fetters that impede their flow;
So growing years have robbed me of the daughters
Of joyous song that oft the youthful know.

But sunlight comes to melt the icy fetters
And bid the stream resume its course of joy;
Such functions may be served by friendly letters,
Like quickening sunshine in their glad employ.

Young friend, you have reached the goal that girls
attain;
The opening bud becomes the blushing rose.
May Heaven's light oft visit you again,
Giving sweeter fragrance than the flower knows.

WOMAN'S CALLING

Your winsome sister chooses law,
Which erring mortals bring to taw.
Another calling you may claim
With equal honor to your name.

The law is like the threshing breeze,
Removing chaff, dead leaves from trees.
But silent agents often bring
Beneficent results in spring.

The sunlight has no herald voice,
Yet bids all nature's realms rejoice.
May you be sunshine in some home,
Though forum's honors may not come.

A WINSOME MAID

A BONNY maid, I dare assert,
Who, having charms, is yet no flirt,
Leading a youth a flowery way
To blast his hopes, and bliss betray.

You are no diamond whose native worth
Has been concealed by neglect from birth,
But culture has polished and made you bright,
To reflect for us heaven's radiant light.

Nor are your charms merely those of sense,
Which appeal to the eye with force intense,
But rather the graces of ripe womanhood
Which adorn the soul and attract the good.

May you be like the heart of the rose
That beauty exquisite may inclose,
Which fragrance rare from within reveals,
Like the love of Christ which the heart conceals.

WOMAN EXALTED

UNNUMBERED agents have essayed to place
The seal of royalty on woman's face;
Have made her reigning queen of homes and hearts,
The fountain whence the stream of joy starts.

Nations have placed the crown upon her brow,
Have sworn allegiance and have kept their vow;
Have put the sceptre in her jeweled hand,
And have made her ruler of her native land.

Poets her charms and praises oft have sung,
When joy prevailed or sorrow sad hearts wrung;
Have pictured her the Harp whose joyous strain
Cheered fainting hearts and bade them hope again.

The chivalry of the past with one accord
Made woman give to victor his reward;
Has placed her deeds in heaven's abiding light,
Safe from eclipse and all approach of night.

Business has brought his tribute to her shrine,
Around her brow the wreaths of honor twine;
Has shown that she can win enlarged success
In marts of trade or scenes of deep distress.

Science has wedded honor to her name,
And given to her deeds undying fame,
Has lauded her discoveries of truth,
And crowned her visions with abiding youth.

Religion, too, attests her pious zeal;
Christ's interests to her tender heart appeal.
Last at the cross, and earliest at the grave,
She still does much man's ruined race to save.

But when she stands, a fair and winsome bride,
Beside the bridegroom chosen at her side,
She fills a place of honor earliest given
By wise Jehovah, Lord of earth and heaven.

THE MARRIAGE ALTAR

MARRIAGE is a sacred thing
The gift of God above;
A precious fountain, lovely spring,
An evidence of love.

An oasis in desert drear,
Marriage creates the home
Where weary wanderers oft appear,
To rest instead of roam.

The oasis is blest of God,
And fed by springs divine;
Attractive products mark its sod,
And light and life combine.

The happy home, when blest of heaven,
Rare products can afford,
Of life and love, combined and given,
By Christ, our living Lord.

How holy, then, is this estate,
To bride and bridegroom given,
Where, for the faithful, joys await
That give foretaste of heaven.

The altar is a sacred sign
Of intercourse with heaven,
Where precious things we oft resign,
Where precious things are given.

Upon the altar sacrifice
And valued gifts are laid;
There we receive what more we prize,
And losses are repaid.

From marriage altar comes the fire
That lights up Gospel story,
The precious symbol from Messiah
Of love for saints and glory.

THE LARD TROUBLE

IF times become hard,
You ascribe it to lard,
A plague of a housekeeper's life.
Its weekly demand
Will sure come to hand,
No matter how saving your wife.

While men must be fed
On biscuit and bread,
 There is no escaping from lard.
Would she see all strife cease
And the household at peace,
 The wife cannot shortening discard.

Men are married to lard,
And they cannot retard
 The consumption it makes on the purse.
Wherever there's home,
From the crib to the tomb,
 Men the burdens of lard must rehearse.

CHECKS

THERE are checks in harness and checks in life,
There are checks in trade and checks to strife,
There are checks in fabrics of many kinds,
And checks that hinder most active minds.

But the check most welcome to human eyes,
And the check which youth and maiden prize,
And the check that may make the day more sunny,
Is the honored check which brings the money.

You have heard, no doubt, the proverb trite
Of the early bird in the morning light.
If my bird, like the lark, would greet the sun,
Perhaps the check would be oftener won.

THE NOMAD

THE life of the nomad is varied and free,
Quite often he wanders new places to see;
Through multiplied dwellings he often may roam,
But finds from their portals no welcome of home.

He may, like the tortoise, find shelter in shell,
Or, like the wild Arab, in fragile tent dwell;
Like sailor or soldier, in places reside
Where rest is not found nor do comforts abide.

But the time may arrive when the nomad shall rest,
And need not depart at the landlord's behest;
When the weary shall seek that soothing repose
Which only when jaded the wanderer knows.

Now may the fair mistress of the comely new
manse
Her present surroundings completely entrance,
So she will not wander for years yet to come,
But find her location a genial home.

GOD'S GIFTS

ABOVE man's horizon God's sunlight appears
To banish our darkness and dispel our fears.
It lights up the mountain and visits the dell;
The humblest dew drop its glory can tell.

This radiant sunshine, the gift of God's love,
Brings manifold blessings to man from above.
It paints the grand rainbow and measures the
hours,
It decks all earth's landscapes, makes fragrant the
flowers.

God's sun and man's Savior, like this orb of day,
Is an image of God to the children of clay.
The blessings of sunlight, describe them who can?
Are symbols of gifts that God offers to man.

The glorious Gospel, the gift of God's son,
A victory o'er sin and o'er Satan hath won;
Shall surely yet conquer the homes of our race
By the might of God's truth and the spirit of
grace.

This radiant Gospel, so gladsome at birth,
Is destined to compass and gladden the earth;
To light man's low levels and loftiest heights,
Whence spirits may soar to eternal delights.

'Tis fitting that mortals so highly endowed,
At seasons to rise above selfish cloud,
To give to each other and glad hours fill
With tokens expressing a cordial good will.

THE MOTHER

HER burdens, her cares, her labors, abound,
Her manifold graces revealing,
With multiplied toils at home she is found,
The bloom from her cheek they are stealing.

Though burdened with care, her heart remains
young,
Clad with radiant bloom immortal,
Like those who on high glad anthems have sung,
That echo within heaven's portal.

Amid the pursuits that task human zeal,
She on earth has the grandest employ,
Which may in ripe manhood the noblest reveal,
Training children for heavenly joy.

Though burdened with cares, she has a calm soul,
For love burns upon her heart's altar;
It rules all her life, imparts self-control,
In duty forbids her to falter.

The mother sometimes may reap upon earth
A rich harvest which brings her reward,
But much higher blessings of heavenly birth
Will the Christ the good mother accord.

SCOTLAND'S FLORA McDONALD

O LAND of the mountain and land of the loch,
Oft torn by the tempest and stern battle's shock,
Thou mother of heroes and sweet bonny maid,
Gems of story and song have thee well arrayed.

The masters of fiction and soul-stirring song,
The princes of pulpit, philosophers strong,
The leaders of cohorts in heroic strife,
Thou hast given the world in the drama of life.

But among your fair gifts, the Flora we sing
Is like to the dewdrop, so bonny in spring,
It has its own beauty, and though lowly born,
It mirrors most clearly the sunlight of morn.

Attractive in person and winsome in wit,
She received a culture that made her most fit
To shine in the crown that adorns womanhood,
By deeds that ennoble and attract the good.

Amid all relations of a changeful life,
As heroic friend, as mother and wife,
In multiplied struggles and battle's loud din,
She revealed the graces that human hearts win.

Her deeds were heroic and her end was peace,
And in bonny Scotland her praise will not cease.
She had a sweet pity, and showed truth and love;
Was brave like a lion, and gentle as dove.

Her people revere her, and in Inverness
A fair shaft of marble their homage attests.
But those who, departing, elsewhere to reside,
Mention Flora McDonald with praiseworthy pride.

Her descendants propose to her memory dear
A college of culture at Red Springs to rear,
To furnish the world, more precious than gold,
Young women like Flora McDonald of old.



WERT BOOKBINDING

JAN

1989

Granville, PA

